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25 February 2014

Johanna Nickolls  
Churchfield CofE (C) Primary School  
Sandy Lane  
Rugeley  
WS15 2LB

Dear Miss Nickolls

### **Serious weaknesses monitoring inspection of Churchfield CofE (C) Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 25 February 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the outcome and findings of the inspection. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the third monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses following the section 5 inspection which took place in March 2013. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time:

The school is making reasonable progress towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be published on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Staffordshire and the Diocese of Lichfield.

Yours sincerely

Sue Barkway  
**Additional Inspector**

## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in March 2013**

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or outstanding by:
  - ensuring that teachers check the work of pupils more frequently in lessons to make sure that the level of challenge is right for all
  - providing opportunities for all pupils to contribute their ideas to discussions and develop positive attitudes to learning
  - enabling staff to observe good or better teaching and to attend training activities, particularly to improve their use of assessment information when planning lessons.
  
- Raise the standards pupils achieve and their rate of progress, especially in mathematics and also in English, by:
  - enabling all pupils to develop a secure understanding of calculations and the confidence to solve mathematical problems speedily and accurately
  - making sure that pupils develop a wider range of words that they feel confident in using in different activities
  - helping pupils to work out unfamiliar words and understand what they mean.
  
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
  - ensuring that the monitoring of the work of the school by senior leaders is rigorous, identifies and addresses specific areas for improvement
  - extending the role of subject leaders in monitoring standards in areas for which they hold responsibility.
  
- An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## **Report on the third monitoring inspection on 25 February 2014**

### **Evidence**

The inspector met with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative from the local authority. She visited four parts of lessons, all of which were joint observations with the headteacher, and looked at pupils' mathematics and English books from all year groups. The inspector also scrutinised school information on the progress being made by pupils and she looked carefully at the school's central record of checks on staff.

### **Context**

Since the last monitoring visit, three new teachers and a caretaker have been appointed. They joined the school in January 2014. There are no other significant changes.

### **The quality of leadership and management at the school**

The headteacher has worked with enthusiasm and commitment to improve the effectiveness of the school. She has made some strong appointments and, as a result, the quality of teaching is rapidly improving. Other actions taken to secure improvements are also beginning to accelerate the progress made by pupils. For example, changes to the way in which pupils are taught to read has resulted in a significant increase in the number of pupils who are reading at the expected level for their age.

The headteacher has successfully delegated some responsibility to other members of the senior leadership team. Subject and phase leaders, particularly for English and the Early Years Foundation Stage, are much more involved in reviewing the curriculum, monitoring the quality of teaching and tracking pupils' progress in their area of responsibility. In addition, they provide good role models, as well as coaching and support, for less-experienced members of staff.

Governors provide good support to the headteacher. They ask questions and check that the school is on track to make the necessary improvements. They have worked well with the headteacher and local authority to ensure that staffing issues were dealt with quickly and appropriately.

### **Strengths in the school's approaches to securing improvement:**

- Teachers provide good-quality feedback on pupils' work. They identify what pupils have done well and what pupils need to do make their work even better.

- Teachers are using checks on pupils' learning more effectively to plan future work. As a result, in most classes, learning activities provide the right level of challenge for pupils of all abilities.
- In most classes, higher expectations have improved the standard of presentation and volume of work in pupils' books.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are making good progress. Teachers use assessments of children's skills and interests to understand when it is beneficial to intervene and when to stand back and let children explore new things for themselves.
- Throughout the school, more rigorous tracking of pupils' progress, combined with a programme of support for those pupils who are not making expected progress, is helping to improve attainment.
- Behaviour and the attendance of pupils have improved significantly in those classes that were previously taught by temporary teachers.

### **Weaknesses in the school's approaches to securing improvement:**

- The quality of teaching in mathematics is still too variable. In some cases, learning is not consolidated or the next step in learning is too big a jump. As a result, pupils find the work too difficult and gaps in their understanding are not picked up quickly enough. This hampers their progress.
- Although teachers consistently identify how pupils can improve their work, they do not always expect pupils to respond. For example, teachers identify that pupils should be using accurate punctuation but do not insist that they correct their work. As a result, pupils continue to make the same mistakes.

### **External support**

The local authority continues to provide a good level of support. For example, the Early Years consultant commissioned by the local authority has worked closely with the school, and this has had an impact on the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage. In addition, the half-termly reviews provide an objective view of the progress made and help to confirm the headteacher's judgements about the quality of teaching.