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25 March 2014

Miss Emma Miller  
Headteacher  
Kirk Hammerton Church of England Primary School  
St John's Grove  
Kirk Hammerton  
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North Yorkshire  
YO26 8DE

Dear Miss Miller

**Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Kirk Hammerton Church of England Primary School, North Yorkshire**

Following my visit to your school on 24 March 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the findings. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in December 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection.

**Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher, four members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. I reviewed a range of documentation including the school and local authority improvement plans, lesson observation records and information about the pupils' current achievements. In addition, I undertook a tour of the school and had a brief conversation with the staff during the morning break.

## **Context**

An additional local authority governor was appointed to the governing body in January 2014.

## **Main findings**

Senior leaders have a sound understanding of what needs to be done to bring about swift improvement. Expectations about what pupils are able to achieve are rising throughout the school. A number of new approaches have been introduced to improve the quality of marking, lesson planning and senior leaders' monitoring of teaching. Feedback from pupils indicates that they have responded positively to the changes and learning routines are being established whereby pupils are increasingly taking responsibility for checking their own work and making improvements without prompting from teachers.

The focus on developing pupils' writing is evident across the school. Pupil's writing is celebrated in displays in the school hall and in each classroom. Writing across the curriculum is being promoted effectively through themed work such as 'our wonderful world'. The pupils' learning journeys to different countries with 'Miranda the explorer' provides them with ample opportunities to practise and enhance their writing skills while learning about different countries cultures and religions.

Literacy learning walls include good examples of pupils' writing. School leaders recognise that more can be done to label the work to provide information that explains what aspects of writing are being developed and achieved well. Writing for a purpose is actively promoted, for instance, through the pupils' recent exchange of letters with school governors. Independent writing areas and writing 'treasures books' in each class are of high quality, creative and imaginative. They are proving successful in promoting pupils' enjoyment of writing and encouraging them to make active choices to find time to write about events in their life and things that interest them.

Effective systems and strategies are being put in place to support and sustain improvement. Tracking and assessment systems have been overhauled. The information generated is being used well by senior leaders to monitor pupil performance with class teachers and ensure individual support is put into place swiftly when needed. The school improvement places are suitable for purpose and follow the areas for further improvement identified during the inspection in December 2013. Monitoring, review and evaluation activities undertaken so far are reflective and used carefully to refine targets and actions. Consequently actions taken to date are beginning to have an impact on the achievement of pupils.

Governors are being provided with more regular and detailed information that enables them to monitor the impact of the actions senior leaders are taking. Several governors are new to their roles and the governing body as a whole is

demonstrating a clear intent to make a difference by accessing a range of appropriate training and committing to a skills audit and an external review which is due to commence in the next few weeks.

Parents are being provided with honest explanations and kept well informed about the school's progress. The school has made good use of its website recently to encourage pupils to write and produce good quality presentations that share what they have learned about Antarctica and South Africa with their parents.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

### **External support**

Support provided by the local authority education development adviser is helping the headteacher to identify and tackle priorities in teaching for example, and developing governors' understanding of what needs to be done to improve the school. Specialist literacy support has recently been planned and is due to commence in the summer term. The appointment of an experienced and knowledgeable local authority governor is proving valuable to new governors in developing their roles and sharpening their ability to hold senior leaders to account. Strong and productive working relationships have been established with other local primary schools, especially Staveley, Marton Cum Grafton, Long Marston and Boroughbridge. This is making a significant contribution to the school's improvement, most notably through the sharing of best practice, professional development opportunities, headteacher peer reviews and joint termly moderation of pupils' work.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for North Yorkshire and as below.

Yours sincerely

Wendy Ripley

### **Her Majesty's Inspector**

The letter should be copied to the following:

- Appropriate authority - Chair of the Governing Body/Interim Executive Board
- Local authority – including where the school is an academy
- Contractor providing support services on behalf of the local authority - where appropriate
- The Education Funding Agency (EFA) if the school has a sixth form
- Diocese – for voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools
- The person or body responsible for appointing foundation governors if the school has a foundation
- DfE - Academies Advisers Unit [ [colin.diamond@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:colin.diamond@education.gsi.gov.uk) ] – for academies