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Mrs Nichola Russell

Headteacher

Sandal Endowed Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior School

Barnsley Road

Sandal

Wakefield

West Yorkshire

WF2 6AS

Dear Mrs Russell

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Sandal Endowed Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior School**

Following my visit to your school on 11 June 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. 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 recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in February 2014.

#### **Evidence**

During this inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, school governors, the school leadership team and a representative of the local authority. The local authority's statement of action and the school's action plans were evaluated.

#### **Context**

The planned amalgamation of the school with the feeder infant school planned for April 2015 has been brought forward to September 2014. Three new governors have joined the governing body since the last inspection.

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

The headteacher has taken prompt and effective action to begin to address the areas for improvement identified since the last inspection. For instance, the health and safety issues identified in the inspection have been addressed, a further audit of health and safety has been carried out in the school and further actions that were identified have been completed. There are now secure and robust systems in place to review provision continually. However, further work is still required to create a culture in the school in which all staff recognise their own responsibility to create and maintain a safe environment.

There has been an emphasis on developing and securing effective practice in the way pupils' work is marked, the feedback pupils receive to improve their learning and how this informs the way teachers plan further learning. Robust and systematic monitoring by school leaders has ensured a consistent approach is now in place. However, the work seen in some pupils' books alongside current pupil progress data in school show that the level of challenge for some pupils is still too low to ensure their rapid progress. Further work to improve the quality of teaching has included staff training on how pupils can best use and apply their mathematical skills and knowledge, and strategies to support spelling. Much of this work and planned future developments are not reflected clearly enough in the school's action plans.

Leaders, supported by the local authority, have an increasingly accurate overview of the quality of teaching and learning in the school. The school has some good examples of pupil tracking data to support this view. This information is now being used to challenge individual teachers to improve their practice.

The governing body has an increasingly clear understanding of what the school needs to do to improve. It is ambitious for the school to improve rapidly. Governors have undertaken a review of their own effectiveness and implemented a detailed action plan to secure their own improvement. They increasingly hold school leaders to account but do not always know of planned improvement activities in a timely manner.

The local authority has supported the school well in evaluating the impact of recent actions and identifying where further refinement is needed to maximise the difference new initiatives are making to the quality of teaching and learning. However, links with other schools have been slow to develop. The school, as a matter of urgency, should set up links with good and outstanding local schools so that staff and school leaders can share best practice and secure judgements about how well the school is progressing.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose. The plan states clearly the actions proposed in light of the inspection. It identifies appropriate resources to support the school.

The school's action plan is not fit for purpose. The school action plan addresses the areas that need improvement. However, targets to indicate intended outcomes in the short and longer term are not precise. For instance, success criteria used by governors to evaluate the actions taken by the school have an insufficient focus on the proportions of pupils making expected and better than expected progress across the school. In addition, some of the actions taken are not clearly recorded in the plan. This makes it difficult for governors to know what the school is doing and how well the school may be improving over time.

The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body, the Corporate Director, Children and Young People for Wakefield. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Brown  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**