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28 November 2014

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 with Rosemary Batty, Additional Inspector, to your school on 26 and 27 November 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 previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in February 2014. The full list of the areas for improvement which were identified during that inspection is set out in the annex to this letter. 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 special measures.

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

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

Yours sincerely  
Jonathan Brown

**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## Annex

### The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in February 2014

#### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the quality of teaching is at least consistently good or better to accelerate pupils' progress in English and mathematics by ensuring that:
  - any inadequate teaching that exists is eradicated
  - good use is made of information from assessing pupils' learning to plan work that meets their varying needs and abilities and that it is made clear to pupils what they are expected to learn from this work
  - learning motivates, engages and challenges pupils enough in their work so that they achieve well and their attitudes to learning and their behaviour are always good
  - pupils are given more opportunities to practise their writing skills, including writing longer pieces of work in subjects other than English, and by insisting that written work is always of the highest standard pupils are capable of achieving.
  
- Ensure that rigorous and robust systems in place to check that the school's health and safety policies and procedures are adhered to at all times.
  
- Improve the effectiveness of leaders at all levels, including governance, in order to secure rapid improvements and to hold teachers to account by:
  - ensuring that all leaders are clear about their roles and responsibilities so they can help to drive improvements in their areas and so that the responsibility for doing so does not rely too heavily on the headteacher
  - strengthening arrangements to check and improve the quality of teaching
  - providing support and training for all leaders, including governors, so that they can effectively analyse data about the performance of the different groups of pupils and evaluate whether any funding spent is making a positive difference.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

## **Report on the second monitoring inspection on 26 to 27 November 2014.**

### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised a range of documents, including the school action plans. Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders, pupils, a small number of parents, members of the governing body, a representative from the diocese and a representative of the local authority. Classrooms were visited and a range of pupils' work was looked at.

### **Context**

From September 2014 the school has expanded its age range to include the early years and Key Stage 1 pupils. Extensive building work to accommodate the increased numbers of pupils is being carried out on the site.

Governors have restructured the school leadership team and one new teacher has been appointed. Two teacher vacancies exist, which are currently being filled by temporary staff.

### **Achievement of pupils at the school**

Evidence gathered during this inspection indicates that rates of progress made by pupils in Key Stage 2 are improving in reading, writing and mathematics and most pupils now make at least expected progress. School leaders have a more accurate view of the progress pupils are making in the school. This is because systems are now in place to track pupils' progress and to check the accuracy of teachers' assessments regularly. The progress for disadvantaged students known to be eligible for support through additional funding has been slower than that of other pupils, however, more recent data collected by the school show that this gap is beginning to close. A review of how the school spends the additional funding for these pupils is planned, but has not yet taken place.

Recent results from national tests for Year 6 pupils in the last academic year for mathematics and reading are currently being withheld and are under review for the purpose of quality assurance by the Standards and Testing Agency. They have not been made available to the school or parents. National comparisons are provisionally available for writing and these show that the progress pupils made was not as rapid as it should have been. Any implications arising from the outcomes of the quality assurance process and any available information from the test results will be a focus for the next monitoring inspection.

School leaders at all levels are aware of the additional challenges the school faces as a result of the expanded age range of the school that now includes pupils and children in Key Stage 1 and the early years. This will be included as part of the focus for the next monitoring inspection.

## **The quality of teaching**

School leaders have had success in reducing and eradicating inadequate teaching. This is because the support and training for teachers, along with monitoring systems put in place to check the quality of teaching, have improved the pace of learning by pupils and raised teachers' expectations of what good learning should be. As a result, pupils say they enjoy and engage more with their learning. Most pupils now know what they need to do to improve their work and they welcome the greater challenge posed by teachers.

Pupils' learning is further enhanced by teachers' better use of questioning in lessons to extend pupils' thinking, more opportunities to talk about and test out pupils' learning in new situations and a more effective system for checking their work and giving them feedback. As a result, the progress being made by pupils is increasingly evident in their books and the pupils' willingness to engage in the lesson. These improvements are not yet fully embedded in all classrooms. More frequent opportunities to apply literacy skills and to write at length are now evident. School leaders are developing opportunities across the curriculum to use and apply skills in mathematics and writing in a range of subjects that are purposeful and complement, instead of distract from, the learning in other subjects.

The new systems for tracking pupils' progress are effective in holding teachers to account and teachers are better at using the data to plan learning. This use of data is in the early stages of development and more work is needed to ensure that the assessments teachers make are always accurate. Teachers have a clearer understanding of the progress pupils are making and the need to plan lessons which engage and motivate pupils of different abilities. Currently, data are not analysed in enough detail about those making expected or better than expected progress for different groups of pupils and it is difficult to compare the progress of different pupil groups.

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils now concentrate better in lessons, are more motivated to learn and, as a result, have fewer tendencies to be distracted or distract others. This is because lessons are more engaging and teachers match activities more effectively to the individual needs of the pupil.

The safety issues identified at the last inspection have been dealt with. The school has faced many challenges through the course of the extensive building works taking place on site. The school has developed an inclusive culture in which everyone recognises their responsibility to keep themselves and others safe. For example, the school council members have taken on a role as safety advocates and record evidence, including photographs, to report concerns to the school leadership team. The site managers make daily checks around the school to ensure the security of the site.

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

School leaders are now moving the school's improvement forward rapidly. This is because the capacity for leadership has been strengthened at all levels. For example, a restructured leadership team has been established with clearer roles and responsibilities and increased accountability to governors. Its members have been supported well to fulfil and carry out their roles through working closely together as a team, additional input from the local authority and partnership-working with other schools. Senior leaders in the school are beginning to take on more responsibility and are becoming more involved in monitoring and evaluating their areas of responsibility. Their monitoring now includes classroom observations, work and data scrutiny and involvement in meetings with teachers about the progress the pupils they teach are making. Evidence from senior leaders' monitoring is used well to check that systems in place are having a positive impact on learning. In addition, the school has developed effective leadership capacity to ensure that procedures for the safeguarding of pupils are secure.

The headteacher and senior leaders have a clearer understanding of the challenges the school faces and the urgency required to address them. They have responded with targeted actions focused on improving teaching and the outcomes for pupils. The plan of action is fit for purpose, as it now focuses on the areas for improvement from the recent inspection report, with a clear allocation of key staff and governors to key tasks. The short-term actions identified are sequenced in a timely manner and implemented with an effective monitoring programme to ensure that these planned actions are carried out. The actions taken have ensured that the school's improvement has progressed well. More detail of planned improvements over a longer time scale is now required to help governors monitor the completion of actions and evaluate the impact of these actions in the medium and longer term.

Staff feel well supported and challenged and held more directly to account. As a result, staff, governors and pupils believe that the school has been transformed with a sharper focus on improving pupils' learning. The parents spoken to have confidence in the school and feel well informed about their child's education.

Governors are now more effective in holding school leaders to account. This is because, as a group, they have reviewed their own strengths and weaknesses and taken action to address them. They quickly received training to fill gaps in their knowledge and improve their understanding of the kind of data information they need to check how well pupils are doing and to challenge leaders more successfully. In addition, they have established a standards committee to drive forward and track the improvements in school. They now receive a wide range of assessment information about pupils' progress, including that of different groups of pupils, such as those disadvantaged pupils entitled to additional funding. They recognise the need to develop these processes further and include more information about other groups at risk of underachieving. Governors are much more involved in the life of the school through more regular and sharper focused visits. As a result, governors

have a better knowledge and understanding of the impact of the actions the school is taking to improve.

### **External support**

The local authority is providing a significant level of challenge and support to school leaders and has a regular presence in the school. This work has begun to have an impact and is highly valued by school leaders. For example, the local authority carries out a review of school performance and the standards being achieved by pupils on a half-termly basis with school leaders and reports directly to the governors' standards committee. As a result, the local authority knows the school well and is able to offer a better level of targeted support. Support includes visits to check on the quality of teaching, pupil progress meetings, reviewing pupils' work, reviewing action-planning and establishing partnership-working with an outstanding school. Partnership work is now in place and is helping provide support to ensure consistency in the quality of teaching and learning across year groups.

The local authority acknowledges that the support for the school to review the effectiveness of additional funding provided for disadvantaged pupils, although now planned to take place, has been too slow.