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Mr Chris Gray
Headteacher
Grindon Hall Christian School
Nookside
Sunderland
Tyne and Wear
SR4 8PG

Dear Mr Gray

Special measures monitoring inspection of Grindon Hall Christian School

Following my visit to your school on 26 February 2015, 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 November 2014.

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher and senior leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and with representatives of the Grindon Hall Christian School Trust. The school's single central record was also scrutinised. The sponsor's statement of action and the school's action plan were evaluated.

Context

Since the previous inspection, the Chair of the Governing Body has stepped down and a new Chair has been elected.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

- The governing body, under the very recently appointed Chair, has begun to address the weaknesses identified in the recent inspection report. The governing body is now more carefully structured so that its committees focus on particular aspects of the school's work. These developments are very recent

and will be evaluated fully at the next Her Majesty's Inspector's monitoring inspection.

- The governing body has responded well to the recent review of governance. Under the leadership of the new Chair, it has further refined and focused the review's findings to ensure that tackling key weaknesses is at the core of its work. It now has a clear 'road map' of actions to improve the governing body's ability to hold leaders to account.
- Leaders are introducing a more robust approach to monitor student progress and the quality of teaching. Leaders are now showing a clearer understanding of what needs to be done and have established appropriate priorities. Leaders now need to act on these decisions to move matters forward quickly.
- The school's improvement plan takes account of the weaknesses identified in the recent inspection report. However, it does not focus specifically enough on how individuals, groups of staff and governors at the school will tackle these weaknesses. Nor does the plan identify clearly enough who is responsible for leading on each action and who is responsible for assessing the impact of these actions.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The sponsor's statement of action is not fit for purpose.

The school's improvement plan is not fit for purpose.

Having considered all the evidence I strongly recommend that the school does not seek to appoint newly qualified teachers.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Executive Director of People's Services for Sunderland. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Mark Evans
Her Majesty's Inspector