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12 May 2015

Mr Mendum  
Headteacher  
Kempsford Church of England Primary School  
Kempsford  
Fairford  
Gloucestershire  
GL7 4EY

Dear Mr Mendum

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Kempsford Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 12 May 2015, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection 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 February 2015. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. At its previous section 5 inspection the school was also judged to require improvement.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- Ensure that pupils have the highest expectations of what they can achieve and are clear about what they need to do to improve their learning
- Use the findings of the upcoming special educational needs review to ensure that the needs of all pupils with behavioural difficulties are met.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with you, two members of staff, three governors, one of whom was the Chair of the Governing Body, and a representative

from the local authority to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. The school action plan was evaluated. Two brief learning walks and a scrutiny of a sample of pupils' work books were undertaken. You also shared the findings of a meeting you held with pupils to find out their views about the changes in school.

## **Context**

Following the departure of the class teacher for Years 3 and 4, a new temporary teacher started after the Easter break and will be with the school until the end of the academic year.

## **Main findings**

You continue to provide a firm steer to the school and are well supported by an astute group of governors. They are working well together to ensure that the improvements needed to make this a good school are being steadily implemented. The 'rapid action plan', or (RAP) as it is commonly known, provides a clear structure for improvement. It also highlights the need for consistently high quality teaching and outlines proposals to secure the school's future financial security. The planned actions to be taken and the evaluations of their success are clearly documented and understood by stakeholders. Currently, responsibility for the planned actions is not shared widely enough and resides too much with you. However, the staffing structure planned for the new academic year includes plans for a wider leadership team which should enable monitoring and evaluation to be shared equitably.

To ensure that pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills are being systematically developed, teachers maintain detailed planning sheets which record how well individuals have achieved at each stage of their learning journey. These planning sheets are regularly checked by a teacher who reports back to her colleagues on the strengths of the planning and areas which need development. By checking the quality of the pupils' work when marking books, teachers know what next steps need to be taken by individual pupils. However, the quality of marking is not yet of a consistently good level to ensure that all pupils have the highest expectations of what they can achieve and know how to improve their learning.

Pupils have a clearer understanding of what they are learning because they are clear about the skills they need to learn and the key vocabulary required. Good use is made of the classroom 'working walls' in order to do this. Such a visual approach supports pupils when working on their own and provides opportunities for them to extend their learning. It also ensures that the more able pupils are being challenged at a level to suit their capabilities. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility for recording what they have learnt and are motivated to continue on their 'learning journey' to the next stage. For example, pupils studying the Romans had a clear understanding of the history skills they needed to develop and the key activities they would need to complete in order to secure and extend their learning. They were able to select important pieces of information in order to build up a comprehensive picture of life

in Rome and then confidently explain the similarities and differences to today in discussion with their peers.

Recent pupil surveys show that they feel positive about their learning and understand what is expected of them. They say how much they enjoy the opportunity to develop a greater sense of responsibility for their learning when using the 'C3 B4' system. Pupils value the chance to find out themselves, ask a friend or seek a resource before putting their hand up for help. The headteacher and governors report that this has made a big improvement to pupil engagement in lessons.

By carrying out joint lesson observations with another headteacher colleague, you are developing a secure understanding of the strengths of your staff and the areas that need improving. Effective feedback to staff is helping them to improve their practice. Visits out to other schools, where they have successfully completed improvement journeys themselves, are supporting teachers refine the way in which they work.

The recent appointment of an experienced teaching assistant to the role of pastoral leader is ensuring that day-to-day behavioural issues are recorded and analysed so that any problems can be sorted out swiftly. There is now a strong focus on ensuring that pupils who, at times, find different situations challenging are supported within their own classroom. The creation of a calm and 'homely' room is helping those pupils who need some individual time and attention to settle. Nevertheless, the upcoming review for the provision of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs is timely and will help to shape improvements to the current support and guidance available in school.

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

## **External support**

The school is receiving a high level of good quality support from both the local authority and the Gloucestershire Learning Alliance (GLA). By providing specialist support and guidance on staffing issues and pupil tracking systems, a clearer picture for the future has emerged for the headteacher and governors. The advice from subject advisers on the moderation of test results and quality of pupils' work over time has enabled teachers to develop a more consistent and accurate approach to marking and assessing work. Visits by staff to other schools within the GLA have resulted in positive changes to the way that teachers plan their lessons and provide feedback to their pupils. A National Leader in Learning (NLE) from Rowanfield Junior School, which is part of the GLA, is working closely with the headteacher and providing regular, high quality, support.

Taking their cue from the GLA, members of the school community have developed an improvement strategy built around Respect, Improve, Succeed and Excel (RISE). By keeping the vision of 'Rising back to good' at forefront of all the work they do, they remain strongly focused on school improvement.

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

Yours sincerely

Lorna Brackstone

**Her Majesty's Inspector**