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Helen Daniels and Jane Foster  
Executive Headteacher and Interim Headteacher  
Bisham Church of England Primary School  
Church Lane  
Bisham  
SL7 1RW

Dear Mrs Daniels and Mrs Foster

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Bisham C of E Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 15 and 16 December 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 previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the third monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in September 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 taking effective action 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 Interim Executive Board and the Director of Children's Services for Windsor and Maidenhead.

Yours sincerely

Siân Thornton  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

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

- Improve the quality of teaching across the school so it is consistently good or better by:
  - making sure teachers' marking and feedback show pupils how to improve their work, and time is provided for pupils to make these improvements
  - ensuring teachers use information about what pupils have previously learned to plan work that challenges them and develops their knowledge, understanding and skills.
- Assess accurately the skills, abilities and needs of every child when they begin the Early Years Foundation Stage and ensure this information is used well to inform teaching, so that all children make the progress they should.
- Raise achievement at all key stages, particularly in writing and mathematics, by lifting teachers' expectations of what pupils can and should achieve.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, including governance, by:
  - ensuring all statutory requirements, including those for safeguarding, health and safety, and the contents of the school's website are fully met
  - ensuring child protection plans are well organised so that leaders can check the right support is in place
  - improving record-keeping so that information about pupils is used well to help meet their needs
  - implementing rigorous systems to check on teaching and achievement, and take effective action so that these improve
  - ensuring governors undertake appropriate training to hold the school fully to account, including checks on how effectively leaders spend additional funding aimed at raising the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.

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

## **Report on the third monitoring inspection on 15 and 16 December 2015**

### **Evidence**

The inspector observed teaching throughout the school, with the executive headteacher. Pupils' work was examined, with information about pupils' achievement and records of leaders' checks on teaching. Meetings were held with members of the interim executive board (IEB), including a representative from the diocese and with representatives of the local authority. A range of documents was scrutinised including records relating to pupils' attendance and behaviour, special educational needs, safeguarding and governance. The inspector took account of the 30 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, the school's recent parents' survey, and conversations held with parents bringing their children to school. Discussions took place with teachers and the school's recent staff survey was considered. The inspector talked with pupils in class, met with a group of pupils and observed playtime and lunchtime.

### **Context**

The headteacher of Cookham Rise Primary School joined the school as executive headteacher in September. The previous interim headteacher continued part time during the autumn term and will leave the school at Christmas. A permanent head of school will join the school in January 2016, to lead with the executive headteacher while also teaching a class.

A permanent teacher joined the Reception and Year 1 class in September. Two new temporary teachers have shared the Year 2 and Year 3 class throughout the autumn term. The incoming head of school will take up this class responsibility in January, supported by an experienced teacher on the days when she undertakes leadership tasks.

Since the last monitoring inspection, the IEB has elected a new Chair and appointed a new diocesan representative.

There are now 46 pupils on the school roll. The vast majority of pupils who left the school since the last monitoring inspection were in Year 6 and moving on to secondary education. A number of new pupils have joined this term.

### **Outcomes for pupils**

Assessments of pupils' achievement at the end of the summer term confirmed the mixed picture found by the last monitoring inspection.

At the end of Key Stage 1, the proportions of pupils achieving the expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics declined compared with 2014. The proportion of pupils who achieved the higher than expected levels also declined, particularly in reading and writing. In mathematics, the proportion who achieved the higher than expected level improved. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' achievement in reading and writing improved. In reading, the standards achieved by pupils at the school were significantly above those achieved nationally. However, pupils' achievement in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 declined.

At the end of Reception Year in 2015, a lower proportion of children achieved a good level of development compared with 2014, although this figure remained above the national average for 2014 (the latest available national figures). In the Year 1 national screening activity for phonics (letters and the sounds they make), the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard rose to well above the national average for 2014. This improvement in pupils' phonics achievement in Year 1 was greater than the national improvement.

Pupils supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding for those entitled to free school meals and those who are looked after) achieved well in 2015 compared with others, as did those with special educational needs. However, too few of the most-able pupils achieved as well as could be expected.

Evidence this term, in pupils' work and teachers' assessments, shows that progress is now improving steadily throughout the school. Increasing proportions of pupils are therefore beginning to work more consistently at the levels expected, including the most able. However, this is not yet the case for all pupils and in all subjects, especially phonics, writing and mathematics.

Pupils are producing increasing amounts of work during lessons and through homework. However, the standard of pupils' presentation remains a concern throughout the school and some pupils' books still regularly feature unfinished work.

Teachers now assess pupils' achievement regularly using consistent methods. The accuracy of assessments is assured through comparison with teachers in other schools using the same system. In writing, secure evidence is available in pupils' books to support the assessments recorded, but this is not always the case in mathematics.

Teachers have set ambitious individual targets for pupils' progress this year, aiming for all to attain at least the standards expected for their age. Aspirational targets have also been set for the achievement of pupils with special educational needs. However, the impact of special programmes is not always assessed frequently enough to support the rapid progress required. Pupils needing extra help to improve their attitudes to learning are not always supported well, through small-step targets, to set out a clear route to success.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

Teachers now work well together as a determined and committed team, to share ideas and support increasing consistency in methods of teaching and managing pupils' behaviour. Teachers act promptly on feedback from senior leaders and enthusiastically adopt methods introduced in training. As a result, teachers continually develop their skills and subject knowledge and elements of good teaching are emerging. Teachers have now improved the whole school environment for learning, with well-organised equipment and resources, and motivating, informative displays.

Pupils are beginning to respond well to these developments by showing greater interest in learning and making more effort with their work. However, the school's approach to teaching mathematics, phonics, spelling and grammar is still not sufficiently systematic. This limits how well teachers can promote the rapid progress which is still required for many pupils to catch up.

When planning lessons, teachers are developing their use of assessment information well to consider pupils' differing needs. Information about pupils' progress in phonics has been used well by teachers to create small teaching groups. Nevertheless, teaching in these groups sometimes lacks clear structure and pace, so that pupils' attention drifts and progress slows.

Teachers' marking provides pupils with helpful guidance about how to improve their work. However, teachers still overlook too frequently issues with the quality of pupils' presentation.

Teachers now provide clearer guidance to teaching assistants, so these staff are increasingly effective when working with pupils who need extra support to learn well. Teaching assistants quickly establish positive and patient relationships with pupils and readily take on new responsibilities such as teaching phonics to small groups. However, teachers still do not always make the best use of teaching assistants' time and skills during lessons.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

Pupils behave well around the school, showing courtesy and respect to adults and each other. The good example of all the adults, and clear rules, supports pupils to work and play together happily. Pupils are enthusiastic about the reinvigorated school council and opportunities to be a house captain or win merit points. During lessons, many pupils are responding well to better teaching by listening attentively and trying hard.

Nevertheless, some pupils still need to develop their resilience and determination, particularly to complete activities in the time allowed and to present work well. Some

younger pupils find it difficult to move smoothly from their phonics group back into the classroom, delaying the start of their next lesson.

The school is now a very safe place. The premises are secure, equipment and resources are well maintained, all safeguarding procedures are in place and staff are well trained. Adult supervision is well organised and observant. First aid is readily available, and pupils are rightly confident that staff care well for them. Pupils told the inspector that there is no bullying at the school, but they know adults would step in to resolve any problem that might occur. Pupils are enthusiastic about the recent improvements including in the playground, the library and toilets. Pupils were keen to tell the inspector how much the new laptops broaden their experience and how their safety online is ensured through electronic filters.

Parents are rightly confident that the school is safe and well managed. The majority of parents responding to Parent View would now recommend the school to others. Parents with whom the inspector spoke were overwhelmingly positive about recent changes in the school and their children's improving progress. Parents have supported the school well to improve pupils' punctuality, so that attendance overall is now above the national average.

### **Effectiveness of leadership and management**

The arrival of the executive headteacher has provided an increasingly clear vision for the improvement of the school. The diligence of the interim headteacher has ensured that important underlying structures, particularly for safeguarding and the assessment of pupils' achievement, are now securely in place. Well-considered recruitment of permanent and temporary staff this term has consolidated the improvements in teaching achieved during the summer term. Senior leaders have ensured staff settle pupils firmly into new routines, with raised expectations for behaviour and learning. Senior leaders have won the confidence of the majority of parents.

The executive headteacher swiftly provided valuable opportunities for staff to work in partnership with colleagues at Cookham Rise and at other good schools. These links are now supporting accelerated development of teaching and the organisation of pupils' learning at Bisham.

Senior leaders now hold teachers firmly to account for pupils' progress through regular meetings, classroom observations and checks on pupils' work. The targets set for pupils' progress link firmly to teachers' performance management. Senior leaders ensure that effective use is made of staff meeting and training time to develop staff knowledge and skills. When leaders observe teaching, they check appropriately that teachers are following advice and guidance, but without always analysing closely whether the desired impact on pupils' progress is being achieved.

Senior leaders acted promptly to develop the leadership roles of new permanent teachers. Teachers readily undertake the responsibilities assigned to them, developing relevant action plans linked to the school's overall improvement planning. The new mathematics leader has rightly identified the urgent need for a consistent approach to the teaching of calculations in mathematics. The physical education leader is successfully building on the school's participation in the local sports partnership to ensure that pupils have regular opportunities for team competition despite the small school roll.

During the summer term, the interim special educational needs coordinator successfully established systems for the accurate identification of pupils' needs, systematic planning to ensure appropriate provision, and effective links with external agencies such as speech and language support. As a result, accurate identification of pupils' needs led to prompt referral and ready support for individual pupils this term, accelerating progress.

Senior leaders have rightly identified the need to review the teaching of phonics, spelling and grammar throughout the school and this is planned for the New Year. In the meantime, effective steps have been taken to ensure continual assessment of pupils' progress in phonics so that pupils are grouped more appropriately for targeted teaching using the school's current methods.

Senior leaders have an accurate view of the school's recent improvement and remaining priorities. However, evaluations and improvement plans are not sufficiently precise about priorities for improvement in teaching and pupils' achievement. This limits the usefulness of these documents to steer the improvement work of staff and the IEB.

Members of the IEB are knowledgeable, committed and hardworking. The IEB holds senior leaders to account well, through regular meetings and the scrutiny of leaders' comprehensive reports. Effective links with the diocese and local authority are assured through representation on the IEB. Nevertheless, improvement plans do not set out clearly how the IEB will check the accuracy of information from leaders, or the impact of leaders' actions on pupils' achievement.



The IEB has ensured well-considered staff recruitment and fully resolved issues concerned with the premises, safeguarding and the school's website. As a result, the school is now a secure environment, with a positive, hardworking staff team. An effective review of the school's use of the pupil premium has been conducted by a suitably qualified member of the IEB, showing that while these pupils have made good progress in recent terms, more can be done when they join the school to ensure good progress from the start.

### **External support**

The local authority has supported the school well, particularly by ensuring continuing capable senior leadership and readily providing resources to resolve premises and safeguarding concerns. The local authority is well informed about the school's improvement through the membership of officers on the IEB. Consultant visits have been reduced this term, in recognition of the school's increasing capacity. When visits have taken place, insufficient feedback has been provided to senior leaders to support them effectively in taking forward the actions discussed. The IEB does not currently receive formal feedback from the local authority's discussions of the school's progress.