

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
www.ofsted.gov.uk



12 January 2016

Mrs H Miller  
Head of School  
St Wilfrid's CE Primary School  
Patterdale Road  
Northenden  
Manchester  
M22 4NR

Dear Mrs Miller

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of St Wilfrid's CE Primary**

Following my visit to the 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 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 May 2015.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time:

**Leaders and managers are taking effective action towards the removal of special measures.**

The local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose.

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

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 Interim Executive Board (IEB), the Director of Children's Services for Manchester and to Manchester Diocese. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Allan Torr  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## Annex

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in May 2015**

- Take urgent steps to improve the quality of teaching in all key stages so that it is at least good, in order to raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics, so that pupils can make good or better progress, by:
  - raising expectations of what pupils can achieve, including the disadvantaged, the most able, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs
  - making sure that all staff have a clear understanding of what pupils already know and of their learning targets and that they use this information to set challenging work and provide support that is closely matched to the pupils' varying needs and abilities
  - improving the quality of marking so that pupils know how and where to improve their work and learn from their mistakes
  - ensuring that all staff use the information from assessing pupils' work to influence the planning of pupils' future learning
  - developing the roles of teaching assistants so that they know precisely what is expected from them in order to effectively support pupils' progress in lessons
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to use, apply and extend their reading, writing and numeracy skills across the subjects of the curriculum
  - ensuring pupils are taught the range of knowledge and skills in the newly planned curriculum
  - making sure that children in the early years are provided with a clear purpose for learning in the activities they undertake and that activities are challenging and maintain their attention, particularly in reading.
  
- Urgently improve pupils' safety, behaviour, and attitudes to learning so that they are all at least consistently good, by:
  - strengthening pupils' understanding of how to deal with bullying, including ensuring all pupils know who to turn to if they are concerned, so that they feel safe
  - making sure that incidents of bullying are dealt with and recorded effectively
  - ensuring that parents have confidence in the school's arrangements for keeping their children safe, particularly at the start and end of the school day
  - ensuring that all staff have a clear understanding of the school's behaviour policy and develop the skills to manage pupils' behaviour effectively
  - ensuring that all pupils have a clear understanding of the expectations of their good behaviour and that they strive to achieve these
  - encouraging all pupils to take care over the completion and presentation of their work.

- Quickly and sustainably improve the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels, including governance, by:
  - significantly strengthening the leaders’ and governors’ partnership with parents so that they have confidence in the school and so that their concerns, including those relating to their children’s safety, are fully addressed
  - taking steps to carefully plan and manage the many and continual changes of staff, including temporary staff, in order to minimise the negative impact of these changes on the quality of teaching, pupils’ achievement and their behaviour and safety
  - establishing rigorous and accurate systems to regularly check on pupils’ progress, including any variances in the achievement of different groups of pupils, so that underachievement is swiftly identified and acted upon and pupils catch up quickly
  - improving arrangements to check on the quality of teaching so that they are regular and robust, and using these findings to improve teaching quickly
  - strengthening the school’s ability to improve at a good rate by addressing weaknesses in middle leadership and developing leaders’ roles particularly in checking that pupils are gaining the knowledge and skills that they need to improve their work
  - making sure that leaders, including governors, check that the use of the pupil premium is effective and that gaps in the achievement of pupils across the school and with other pupils nationally, are closed quickly.

## **Report on the first monitoring inspection on 15–16 December 2015.**

### **Evidence**

I observed teaching in English or mathematics in each class and looked at pupils' work in books. I met with two out of the four members of the IEB, which was formed at the start of September to replace the governing body. I held a discussion with a representative of the local authority and with a range of staff, including the three newly qualified teachers. I reviewed the school's improvement plan and the local authority's statement of action.

### **Context**

Following the publication of the previous inspection report, the headteacher left the school and resigned at the end of August. At this time, the local authority seconded the experienced headteacher from Crossacres Primary Academy to act as executive headteacher for part of each week until Christmas. The deputy headteacher took the role of head of school.

A new assistant headteacher took up post in September, as did three newly qualified teachers. A teacher left part-way through the autumn term, replaced by an experienced teacher. Since the inspection, six new teachers have started at the school.

The local authority and the diocese used their powers to disband the governing body and replace it with an Interim Executive Board (IEB). Discussions are taking place with a view to the school converting to an academy, very likely as a part of the St James and Emmanuel Trust.

### **Outcomes for pupils**

Outcomes for pupils are improving, particularly in writing. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 at the start of term struggled to write simple sentences, but by the end of this term were writing well-structured pieces of work with an appropriate level of punctuation and grammar. In Years 5 and 6, there are some significant gaps in pupils' writing skills because of previous poor teaching. The teachers in these year groups are using their time effectively to plug gaps in pupils' skills quickly, while at the same time extending and improving the quality of their writing. There are some good examples of pupils' writing in other subjects such as in history and art. Teachers make better use of other subjects to extend pupils' vocabulary and technical language. In Year 5, for example, pupils looked in detail at a painting by Bruegel and came up with some thoughtful observations to describe the scene and the characters in the painting. The teachers in Years 5 and 6 do not accept simple answers and continually challenge pupils to provide better and more complex answers.

Outcomes for children at the end of Reception in 2015 were below average, which means too many children still did not have the skills, knowledge or understanding that they needed to start Year 1. The youngest children are now making better progress from their starting points after they start in Nursery. During the inspection, children could choose one of several interconnected activities, all of which were well-designed to help them make progress in their pre-handwriting in whichever activity they chose. Children's progress in the Reception classes is also improving. During the inspection, they completed activities which helped them make progress in adding numbers to 20 and in understanding the idea of 'double'. They concentrated for longer periods and had the chance to explain and reason their thinking.

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

The local authority and external specialists have conducted external reviews into the quality of teaching. The reviews indicate weak teaching at the time of and following the inspection but they also indicate that there has been improvement since September and again since November. Training for staff to improve the quality of teaching, partly with the help of teachers from Crossacres Primary, is working.

Senior leaders introduced a new marking policy. All staff are consistently following the same system of marking pupils' work. Leaders have introduced a new policy to make sure that all teachers are approaching addition, subtraction, multiplication and division in the same way. This has worked and there is a consistent system of teaching calculations. The school has not as yet made sure staff include the aims of the mathematics National Curriculum in their lessons.

One of the reasons why teaching has improved is because staffing is far more stable. Parents have been rightly extremely concerned about the large number of temporary teachers. Since September there have been fewer changes to teaching assistants or to teachers. Teaching in Years 2, 5 and 6 is particularly effective, and pupils, according to their work, are making faster progress.

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

Leaders since September have focused largely on making sure pupils' behaviour and attitudes improve. This has been successful. Fifty-six pupils answered Ofsted's online survey and almost every pupil agreed that they are encouraged to respect people from other backgrounds, there is an adult they can talk to and that they feel safe. There has been a significant reduction in bullying and behaviour incidents and a majority of pupils now agree that behaviour is good in lessons and around school all or most of the time. There is a much improved system in place for recording any incidents of poor behaviour and/or bullying and, most importantly, following these incidents up on a daily basis to make sure there is no reoccurrence. Any victims of bullying are provided with a friendship group who discuss ways every day of making

the victim feel more confident and happier. This system is already proving to be effective.

There is a new code of conduct in place and pupils' behaviour no longer reflects the significant criticisms in the previous inspection report. In most lessons, particularly in Years 2, 5 and 6, pupils get on well together, respond quickly to the teachers' requests and are able to concentrate on their work. In a few classes, pupils mess around or quietly do not get on with their work. It is in these same few classes that pupils present their work poorly or still show a lack of care for others.

Senior leaders have taken effective action and the procedures at the start and at the end of the day have been overhauled. There is a much safer system in place to release pupils at the end of the day to be collected by their parents. In response to the school's own survey, 132 out of 135 parents agreed that children are now safe coming into and leaving school.

### **The effectiveness of leadership and management**

The school's plan over the next year to improve so that the judgement of special measures is removed has some strengths. However, overall it is not fit for purpose because it does not explain in enough depth precisely how aspects of teaching will be improved, particularly in mathematics. Similarly, it is not precise enough about what aspects of teaching need to be improved. It is also difficult to decipher a timetable of actions to make sure not all aspects for improvement are covered at the same time. Despite this weakness, the school has made reasonable progress. The local authority's statement of action meets requirements and there is some explanation about how parents will be kept informed. There has been a well-attended parents' evening, but little since in terms of reporting progress against the issues identified in the report.

The local authority commissioned a well-written and useful report, which identified clearly some weaknesses in how the pupil premium grant is used. Some of the findings have already been tackled to make sure disadvantaged pupils have the support they deserve and to which they are entitled.

A criticism at the previous inspection was the lack of a system to check on the work of the school and the quality of lessons. This has been tackled effectively. All teachers now have recorded targets which can be used to measure their performance. Training is used effectively to make sure every member of staff has what he or she needs to teach at their best. This has resulted in some significant improvement in individual teachers' practice. Some of the checks on teaching are not as detailed or as subject specific as they could be.

Since September, senior leaders have worked hard to regain the trust of parents. Evidence from parent surveys indicates a much higher approval rating of the school.

Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, remains highly negative about the school. Staff have reformed the parents' association, have started to consider restoring the dismantled library and talk informally to parents at the start of every day.

The head of school and the executive headteacher have both been integral to the school's improvement this term. The local authority and the IEB has rightly concentrated in this term on shoring up senior leadership, and, as a result, the school has not started working to develop middle leaders.

The previous admission policy adopted by the previous governing body resulted in the school breaking the law. Consequently, the Key Stage 1 classes have more than 30 pupils in them. A new admissions policy has been created to prevent this situation reoccurring. The problem, however, remains that there are too many pupils in these classes.

### **External support**

The diocese and local authority's support has been high quality and highly effective. The local authority representative wasted no time after the inspection in setting up an IEB, brokering leadership from a local school, and taking action to improve the quality of leadership. Staff from Crossacres Primary Academy have worked alongside teachers to improve their teaching. This has worked well. The deputy headteacher from Crossacres has spent two half-days a week helping to improve outcomes for the younger children. In Reception and Nursery, the environment is cleaner, activities are purposeful and teaching has improved. The diocese and local authority's constant challenge and actions have helped to stabilise staffing at the school and to provide extra capacity to leaders to be able to improve the school themselves.