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Mrs S Sayers  
Executive headteacher  
Send CofE First School  
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Woking  
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Dear Mrs Sayers

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Send CofE First School**

Following my visit to your school on 24 and 25 February 2016, 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 February 2015. 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:

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

The school may appoint one newly qualified teacher to teach in the Reception Year 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 Chair of the Federation Governing Body, the Regional Schools Commissioner, the Director of Children's Services for Surrey and the Director of Education for the diocese of Guildford.

Yours sincerely

Clive Close

**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by ensuring that:
  - work in lessons is set at the right level so that all pupils are fully challenged
  - teachers plan effectively for reading, writing and mathematics
  - teachers' questioning extends pupils' knowledge and understanding and involves them in responding in a way that takes their learning forward
  - teachers' feedback to pupils is clear and specific and that pupils respond fully so that they are more involved in improving their own work
  - teaching assistants provide effective support and engage more positively with pupils
  - systems to check on pupils' progress are sufficiently thorough and are used by teachers to identify clear next steps for pupils' learning.
- Raise pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics by ensuring that:
  - there is regular well-planned teaching of reading, and this is focused on the development of key skills that pupils can use when reading independently
  - in writing, there are clear expectations for each year group for punctuation, spelling and grammar that are thoroughly reinforced
  - phonics (letters and the sounds they make) are taught systematically, especially in the early years
  - there are more opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical knowledge and skills through problem solving and investigation.
- Improve the quality of the provision in the early years so that children's needs are better met, by ensuring that:
  - planning for activities is thorough, tailored to children's needs and challenging for all
  - staff have a secure understanding of children's development and learning
  - the classrooms and outdoor areas are exciting and stimulating so that children do not wander around aimlessly but are interested and learning
  - adults' questioning and discussions with children develop their knowledge and understanding
  - staff promote children's social skills much more extensively.

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - training for senior and middle leaders enables them to carry out their roles more effectively so that they bring about rapid improvement in teaching and pupils' achievement
  - senior and middle leaders develop a clear understanding of how to interpret and use information for tracking pupils' progress in order to raise pupils' achievement
  - all governors receive the necessary training to enable them to support the school fully in making rapid improvement
  - there is effective support for pupils who receive additional funding and for those who are disabled or who have special educational needs within the classroom in order to cater for their needs more fully and ensure they make rapid progress
  - there is strong, effective leadership of the early years.
- Improve behaviour by developing pupils' understanding of the importance of good behaviour wherever they are.
- Improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils.
- An external review of governance should be undertaken to show how this aspect of 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 leadership and management may be improved.

## **Report on the second monitoring inspection on 24 and 25 February 2016**

### **Evidence**

During the inspection I observed a wide range of the school's work, including visiting every classroom to observe teaching and learning, accompanied by the executive headteacher and the executive deputy headteacher. I met with parents, the Chair of Governors and the Vice-Chair of Governors. I held meetings with a representative of the local authority and a representative of the diocese. Meetings were also held with school leaders at all levels. I also spoke to pupils, discussing their work and how they felt about their school. I scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school development plan, the school's own records of the quality of teaching, and pupil progress and achievement information.

### **Context**

There have been no major changes in the context of the school since the last monitoring inspection. The governing body recently consulted publicly on merging the school with its federated partner, St Bede's Church of England (Voluntary Aided) Junior School.

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

The executive headteacher continues to lead the school with clear vision and total commitment. In a relatively short period of time, and with the strong support of the executive deputy headteacher, she has arrested the decline in standards and paved the way for the rapid improvement required to make this a good or better school.

Self-evaluation is a strength. Because of this, school leaders are clear about those areas that need improving most. Their priorities are the right ones. Communication between staff at all levels is much improved. Teachers and learning support staff see school improvement as their responsibility, not just that of school leaders.

The quality and effectiveness of middle leaders has become much more of a focus since my last visit. It is now clear to see that this aspect of leadership is a growing strength, with middle leaders having a better impact on improving the quality of teaching. This is especially the case in the early years, where focused leadership has already had a very good impact on the quality of provision and the progress children are making.

The governing body continues to grow in strength. Governors are now much more efficient in their role of holding school leaders to account. They know the school well and have a growing mix of specialist expertise amongst their ranks. This is enabling them to more effectively support the executive headteacher and other school leaders in bringing about the improvements required to make this a good school.

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

The quality of teaching is improving. However, there are still inconsistencies across year groups. Because of this, pupils sometimes don't make the progress they are capable of.

The school's own records of monitoring the quality of teaching over time show that not enough is consistently good or better. School leaders have identified key areas of teaching, learning and assessment that still require a focus if pupil progress is to be accelerated and the legacy of poor provision is to be overcome.

In some lessons, the level of challenge that pupils receive does not ensure that their learning is either deepened or extended. In some year groups, the level of expectation is not high enough. This is especially the case with pupils currently capable of achieving at higher levels. Staff are aware of this and rightly see these aspects as a high priority for improvement.

Notwithstanding the inconsistencies mentioned above, the monitoring of the progress pupils make is beginning to have a positive impact on the way teachers and learning assistants plan and deliver learning activities. This has had particular impact on pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and those with special educational needs, who are now making much better progress.

Teaching in the early years has seen a big improvement since my last visit. The school's own monitoring records show that the quality of teaching in this phase is now consistently good. The learning environment has also improved. Children now benefit from much better-quality provision and their individual needs are met well. Because of this, many more are making or exceeding the progress which might be expected of them.

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

The personal development and welfare of pupils is catered for well. School leaders have ensured that while the key focus has been on improving outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics, the wider curriculum has not suffered unduly. Themed weeks, including those that focus on citizenship or health and fitness for instance, have continued to play an important part in engaging pupils in their learning.

Pupils told me they enjoy coming to school and that they enjoy the different learning activities staff provide for them. One girl was particularly excited about building a 'working' rocket, taking great care in explaining the components required to ensure it flew properly along a wire guide. Equally enthused, a group of boys told me they enjoyed finding answers to questions posed by their teacher about the information contained in the book on bicycles they were reading.

During visits to classrooms pupils generally appeared engaged in their learning, although there were instances where low-level off-task behaviours could be seen. This was particularly the case when the level of challenge was less than might be expected.

At the time of the last inspection, behaviour in classrooms and around the school was identified as a barrier to learning. During my visit I saw no examples of poor behaviour or indiscipline. However, pupils told me that their learning is sometimes spoilt by the actions of a minority of pupils. School leaders are aware of this and working hard to ensure this aspect continues to improve, so that behaviour is consistently good or better.

The school's work to ensure that pupils attend regularly and on time continues to prove effective. This is especially the case with those pupils from vulnerable groups, whose attendance is much improved.

### **Outcomes for pupils**

Outcomes for pupils continue to improve. The school's own pupil progress and attainment information shows that this year's outcomes in all year groups and all subjects are likely to be better than those seen in the last two years.

Children are now making much more progress in the early years phase. This is because the quality of provision in the Nursery and Reception classes caters for their needs more closely than it did in the recent past. Many more are predicted to leave the Reception classes at the end of this year with levels of development appropriate for children moving into Year 1.

Outcomes and the progress pupils make in reading, writing and mathematics have also improved, although the school recognises that reading and mathematics are stronger than writing. Because of this, school leaders have made recent changes to the way different aspects of writing are taught, including the frequency with which children write. Early signs indicate that these changes are having a good impact on the progress pupils make.

The school has particularly focused on its provision for disadvantaged pupils and those pupils with disability or special education needs. Because of this, these pupils are making much better progress than in the past. Disadvantaged pupils in particular have benefited from bespoke interventions to ensure gaps in their knowledge are addressed. Because of this, their progress is much more rapid than in the past, resulting in their attainment now being broadly in line with other pupils in the school and nationally.

## **External support**

The local authority and diocese board are playing a decisive and effective role in moving the school forward. This includes work on the proposed merger of the federated partnership schools and development of the school site. Because of this, and the efforts of the governing body, the executive headteacher has been more able to concentrate her efforts on improving the quality of teaching and the impact this has on the achievements of pupils.

The support for leaders, governors and teaching staff provided by the local authority in particular has been more focused since my last visit. There is now more of a sense of everyone working together to ensure the school makes the rapid progress required to become good or better. The local authority's impending checks of the school's latest assessment and pupil progress information will be useful in helping school leaders evidence the robustness of the new system this is based on.