

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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



10 March 2016

Mrs Gillian Leadbetter-Simms
Interim Headteacher
Central Church of England Junior School
Orchard Street
Chichester
West Sussex
PO19 1DQ

Dear Mrs Leadbetter-Simms

Special measures monitoring inspection of Central Church of England Junior School

Following my visit with Kathryn Moles, HMI to your school on 2 and 3 March 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 that 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 that took place in February 2015. The full list of the areas for improvement that 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 not appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Education for the Diocese of Chichester, the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for West Sussex County Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Abigail Wilkinson

Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection that took place in February 2015

- Make sure teaching is good and provides pupils with opportunities to learn more quickly, by ensuring:
 - teachers check on pupils' understanding as it develops and adapt their explanations and pupils' tasks appropriately
 - teachers' planning focuses clearly on the skills that pupils need to learn
 - pupils benefit from regular opportunities to read and enjoy a wide range of interesting books
 - all teachers understand how best to promote the learning of the most-able pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Increase the rate and consistency of the progress pupils make across the school, particularly in mathematics and writing, by:
 - improving teachers' understanding of what skills and knowledge pupils should be confident with at each stage of their learning
 - making sure teachers expect more of pupils of all abilities
 - ensuring teachers give pupils more precise feedback about what pupils need to do to improve, and ensure pupils make these improvements quickly
 - supporting disadvantaged pupils more effectively, including in lessons, so that their progress accelerates.
- Improve pupils' attitudes towards their learning by:
 - involving pupils in setting appropriate targets and checking their progress towards them
 - making sure pupils develop their determination to tackle challenging tasks, without giving up too quickly
 - ensuring pupils understand how they can resolve minor issues and conflicts themselves before they escalate.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management across the school, by:
 - involving leaders at all levels in checking the quality of teaching and giving teachers more helpful feedback about what needs to improve
 - making sure that middle leaders have the skills and confidence to check that teachers are making the changes that need to happen and that improvements are sustained over time
 - ensuring that policies are up to date and reflect current requirements
 - reviewing the way the pupil premium funding is used, in order to accelerate rapidly the progress eligible pupils make.
- Increase the effectiveness of governors in holding the school to account for bringing about improvements, by:
 - following up issues that are identified more rigorously
 - establishing more robust systems for keeping a close check that policies and procedures are up to date and reflect current changes in practice and best

- practice
- setting higher expectations for the quality of leadership in the school and the impact leaders have on improving the quality of teaching.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess 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 third monitoring inspection on 2 and 3 March 2016

Evidence

During this monitoring inspection, 14 lessons were observed, five jointly with leaders. Inspectors met with senior leaders, subject leaders and four governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body. Inspectors spoke to parents and a group of pupils from across the school. An inspector listened to pupils from Year 3 and Year 5 read and scrutinised a sample of reading records. Pupils were observed during their breaktime and assembly. In addition, inspectors evaluated attendance information and reviewed the checks leaders make on the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' progress. Governing body minutes and records of their visits to school were also considered. A sample of pupils' books from all year groups was scrutinised, including those for English and mathematics. Documentation relating to how the school keeps pupils safe was also checked.

Context

The new interim headteacher has been appointed as permanent headteacher from 1 September 2016. Two teaching appointments have been made, including one leadership role for English.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Since the previous monitoring visit, leaders have taken concerted action to tackle shortcomings in teaching and learning. Teaching staff show a deeper understanding of the factors that affect pupils' progress in their class and can now draw on an increased range of teaching strategies to use in response. This is because the professional development opportunities provided by leaders over the last term have been more closely shaped to the key barriers that were preventing teaching from improving. Teachers have been re-energised by being able to talk more frequently with leaders about their practice. As a result, teaching is securing improvements in the progress pupils make.

Subject leaders' confidence has strengthened through their work with external consultants. However, these leaders have not yet fully assumed responsibility for all of the checks they need to make. Subject action plans for English and mathematics

are in place, which take account of performance information. However, actions need to be more precisely tuned to addressing the specific needs of underperforming groups of pupils, such as disadvantaged pupils in Years 4 and 6 in writing and mathematics. Milestones to show the intended success of planned actions need to be sharper and time limited.

Governors ensure that the full range of statutory policies are refreshed and updated. Performance management arrangements are now fit for purpose and enable leaders to hold teachers to account. Governors provide increasingly precise challenge to school leaders. This is because they are better informed about current outcomes for pupils through their attendance at pupil progress meetings and the reports they receive from leaders. In addition, reports from the local authority now reflect a more accurate picture of the current performance of the school.

Parental views of the school are mixed. Parents say that communication from leaders about the school's approach to learning has improved. Some parents, for example, attended the recent series of workshops provided for reading, mathematics, spelling and assessment. They are delighted by their children's increased progress, enthusiasm and motivation, particularly in mathematics. Parents also know that there has been a change in the school's approach to managing behaviour within the last term. Some parents were not able to attend the workshop provided by leaders to explain these changes. They feel that pupils' behaviour in lessons, particularly in Year 6, is not improving quickly enough. They do not always feel that they know how leaders are addressing the concerns they raise.

The school is in the process of moving towards academy status with the Diocese of Chichester Academy Trust. This process has been supported by the Department for Education. Governors have produced information updates for parents and published these on the school website. A parents' meeting is planned for later this month.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Teaching shows a sharpened response to pupils' needs. In mathematics, for example, planning is now adapted within the week to reflect pupils' progress and their understanding of key concepts. This helps teachers to identify gaps in pupils' learning and address them more quickly.

Mathematics teaching is beginning to ignite pupils' enthusiasm for the subject. Pupils spoken to by the inspector said that they felt more challenged in mathematics now. In Year 4, for example, the most-able pupils were asked to investigate which products were possible using a given selection of prime factors. Pupils were able to choose how to present their findings and engaged in animated debate about which products could be made or not, justifying their answers carefully. Similarly, in Year 3, pupils who could use a number line to find solutions to division with remainders were taught to apply a more efficient strategy with fewer steps.

Pupils write more regularly at length and consequently their stamina for writing is increasing. They choose vocabulary increasingly well to match the purpose of their

writing because they see good examples of language choices in the texts that are shared with them. Presentation of work continues to improve and is more consistent now across the school. Pupils in all year groups are asked to correct spelling and grammatical errors routinely, and examples of unfinished or untidy work are reducing.

Systems are in place for ensuring that pupils read regularly with an adult. There is a structured approach to group reading which enables pupils to experience texts of increasing complexity. Some variability remains between classes in the quality of teachers' use of questioning to help pupils interrogate the texts they read. However, while pupils say that they enjoy reading, the school library is unused and underdeveloped.

Increasingly, teachers' explanations are clear and well supported by accurate subject knowledge. Pupils know what they are learning about and how they can check whether they have been successful because there is meaningful dialogue between teachers and pupils about how pupils can improve their work further. Pupils show that they can return to their work and improve it so that it is more accurate. There remains some inconsistency in this, however, because teachers do not always check that pupils' subsequent work is stronger or more accurate as a result of the feedback they have been given. Pupils' progress is slower in some year groups than others as a result.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

A new behaviour policy, setting out the school's approach to promoting positive learning behaviours, has been implemented and shared with parents this term. Pupils say that they like the new learning behaviour ladders in their classrooms and know what they need to do to show 'outstanding' learning behaviour. They say that the newly introduced 'learning partners' approach is helping them to work together to solve problems and share ideas. Although pupils' attention and focus during lessons have improved in most year groups, these remain inconsistent, particularly in Year 6.

Leaders ensure appropriate support for individual pupils with significant behavioural needs. They maintain clear records of any incidents and adapt risk assessments accordingly. Partnership working around vulnerable pupils is being strengthened by leaders' persistence in following through concerns with external agencies. This is securing the right help and support to meet the needs of individual pupils.

Pupils play well together during breaktimes, utilising a range of equipment such as balls and hoops safely in small games. Staff circulate and interact with pupils positively and ensure that routines for entry to the building maintain order. Pupils respond quickly to adults' requests and are supported well to resolve any small conflicts that emerge.

Leaders monitor attendance closely and are able to identify individual pupils whose absence causes them concern. They have set high expectations for attendance and

are working closely with families whose children miss school regularly. However, the information leaders collect shows that attendance is not improving sufficiently quickly. Strategies to tackle this, including sensitive work with vulnerable families, have not yet increased the proportion of pupils who attend school regularly.

Outcomes for pupils

The interim headteacher has simplified the system used to collect and interpret performance information. Close involvement of staff in this process has meant that they now understand how the information is collected and what it tells them about the progress pupils are making in their class. Governors too, know what the information shows them about each year group and individual subjects. All leaders and staff are now more closely involved in checking the accuracy of the information they collect. Teachers have increasingly regular opportunities to discuss how well pupils' work reflects year-group expectations. This lends increasing confidence to the validity of the performance information reported by the school.

Progress for pupils in reading, writing and mathematics across all year groups is improving. This is because leaders have ensured that individual teachers are more keenly aware of their responsibility to address any shortfalls in the progress pupils make. In Years 3 and 5, over three quarters of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are projected to meet age-related expectations at the end of the year in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' progress in Year 6 remains too slow, particularly in writing and mathematics. Gaps in learning for this year group have not been successfully addressed at the speed that is needed to help these pupils catch up.

External support

The local authority has appropriately reshaped its support for this school, ensuring that consultancy focuses on key areas of teaching and leadership that help the school to improve more quickly. Reports to leaders this term provide an accurate reflection of the current picture of the school's performance. They provide an appropriate evaluative role to challenge leaders, including governors, for the impact of their actions on pupils' progress. The local authority recognises the need to reduce its consultancy support for the school where capacity in leadership is building.