

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



31 October 2016

Mrs Sheila Storey  
Headteacher  
Whinmoor St Paul's Church of England Primary School  
Whinmoor Crescent  
Leeds  
LS14 1EG

Dear Mrs Storey

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Whinmoor St Paul's Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 28 September 2016, 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 November 2015. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

At its section 5 inspection before the one that took place in November 2015, the school was also judged to require improvement.

Senior leaders and governors are not taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the last section 5 inspection in order to become a good school.

#### **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with you, other senior and middle leaders, four members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. The school action plan was evaluated. One lesson was visited with you and pupils' work was scrutinised. Time was spent reviewing school documentation relating to the monitoring of teaching and learning, standards and governance.

#### **Context**

Since the last inspection, three teachers have left and there is a temporary teacher covering the Year 6 class until the end of term. A permanent teacher has been

appointed for January 2016. A newly qualified teacher has been appointed to replace a job share in Year 3.

## **Main findings**

You have failed to ensure that the actions you put into place have been rapid enough and effective enough to secure the improvements needed. The school has been judged to require improvement on two previous occasions and the last full inspection was in November 2015. Some actions were not set in motion rapidly enough to secure the better progress needed and that should be expected of the pupils in this school. You and your leaders have focused on getting things done and reporting on this, rather than evaluating the impact of what has been done to gather an accurate view of the impact of your actions and the progress the school is making. This means your evaluation of the school's current position is overly positive.

The impact of the wealth of external support you and your leaders have received is not sufficiently evident in teaching, assessment, pupils' learning and the level of progress pupils make. This is because you and your leaders still focus too much on what teachers do rather than evaluating the impact of teaching on learning.

From the outset, expectations of what children know and can do have been too low. Children in the early years still do not have access to a learning environment and teaching that promotes the effective characteristics of learning well enough. There have been some changes, but the leader is unclear about the purpose of these. Some daily routines slow children's learning and inhibit progress in key areas of learning such as literacy. Checks on teaching and assessment still do not dig deeply enough into the quality of learning for children. On paper, children appear to make notable progress from low starting points. There are indications, such as the context of the school, to suggest that these starting points are not accurate. Checks on this are not robust enough.

Some improvements can be seen in the teaching of mathematics. The mathematics lead has worked very hard to develop the quality of teaching and the learning environment. She has a fairly accurate view of teaching which remains variable. She is not afraid to challenge some teachers who are still failing to comply with the school's agreed systems for marking and feedback. She has rightly identified the need for teachers to have higher expectations of pupils and promote a 'can do' attitude. She knows girls' achievement in mathematics is not where it needs to be. She has yet to take appropriate action based on a more precise analysis of teaching. Pupils' work and outcomes show that there is more work to be done to ensure that the most able achieve the high standard they are capable of.

Some aspects of the school's safeguarding procedures concerning the checks you make on the suitability of staff were not compliant and potentially could have exposed pupils to harm. You made sure that this was sorted by the end of the inspection, but it was another indicator of some key failings in leadership.

You present governors with performance information they are able to analyse to provide the level of challenge needed but you are often overly positive, and sometimes evasive, in your evaluation and responses to their questioning. More recent appointments have brought greater focus and rigour to their work and they have been following up concerns by checking and holding leaders to account more robustly. This has given them a more accurate view of the school's work, particularly in the early years.

There are, however, some vulnerabilities in governance because attendance at committee meetings is not good. There is an overreliance on a small number of governors to provide the challenge needed. Some of them, along with the local authority, have been concerned about the pace of improvement and challenged you about this, but there has been a disagreement among governors as to the right course of action to take following the concerns raised by the local authority.

Immediately following my visit, because of my concerns about the insufficiency of the actions being taken by the school, I met with the full governing body and the head of school improvement to discuss my findings.

### **External support**

The local authority has provided a wealth of support in a timely manner for you and leaders and checked closely on the progress the school is making. Because of its concerns, the local authority set up a joint review group to provide challenge at the highest level. The local authority was unequivocal in making clear its findings to you and the governing body earlier in the year.

The diocese has provided some level of support and challenge, but this has not been consistent or robust enough to hold you to account in the way it should have.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Diocese of Leeds and the director of children's services for Leeds. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Anne Bowyer  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**