

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



26 April 2017

Mrs Heather White
Executive Headteacher
Lubenham All Saints Church of England Primary School
School Lane
Lubenham
Market Harborough
Leicestershire
LE16 9TW

Dear Mrs White

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Lubenham All Saints Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 5 April 2017, 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 second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in March 2016. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection in order to become a good school.

Leaders and those responsible for governance should take further action to:

- check more closely the progress made by disadvantaged pupils
- ensure that teachers give pupils more opportunities to answer questions requiring inference (using clues in a text to reach a conclusion) to improve their reading comprehension skills.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with the interim executive headteacher, the acting deputy headteacher, the early years leader, a group of pupils, the chair and the vice-chair of the governing body, and the chief executive officer of the Learn Academies Trust. A phone call was held with a representative of the local authority. The school improvement plan was evaluated. I observed teaching in all four classes and looked at pupils' work throughout the school. I scrutinised records of behaviour, the governing body's action plan, minutes of meetings of the governing body, the Learn Academies Trust's action plan, and documentation relating to safeguarding.

Context

Following the previous monitoring visit in September 2016, the headteacher resigned her position. An interim executive headteacher has been appointed. She is also the headteacher of St Andrews Primary School, North Kilworth.

In January 2017, the class teacher for Years 5 and 6 resigned. The deputy headteacher from Little Bowden Primary School was seconded to teach the class in the mornings until Easter 2017. A teacher from Great Bowden Primary School was seconded to teach the class for two afternoons a week. Teachers and teaching assistants have taught the class on the other three afternoons. Plans are in place to cover the teaching of this class until the end of the academic year.

A new special educational needs and disabilities coordinator has been appointed for one day a week, shared with St Andrews Primary School.

Following the previous monitoring visit, the chair of governing body also resigned. The vice-chair became the chair and a new vice-chair of governors was appointed. Four new governors have also joined the governing body.

Main findings

The governing body has taken rapid and effective action to improve its leadership role at the school. It is checking much more closely the progress that the school is making to tackle the issues that arose during the previous monitoring visit. The school is now improving and the pupils are making better progress.

The governing body took swift action following the previous monitoring visit. The new chair has brought a sense of urgency to improving standards at the school. The governors have written and implemented an action plan following the external review of governance. This has involved extensive training for governors to develop their knowledge and skills so that the governing body can effectively hold leaders to account for the performance of the pupils. Governors are now consistently challenging leaders about how much progress pupils are making.

Governors are also finding out for themselves how well the pupils are doing. They regularly come into school and observe the leaders' monitoring activities. Governors have observed leaders complete a scrutiny of pupils' work and interviewed pupils about their reading. This has helped them to understand whether or not the actions taken by leaders are benefiting the pupils.

The interim executive headteacher has made a good start. She has improved the school's communication with parents and managed the changes to staffing well. The school's improvement plan has clear actions and timescales for improvement. Leaders review pupils' progress with teachers to evaluate if the actions taken have been successful. The teachers' appraisal is closely linked to whole-school targets to ensure that everyone is focused on the key priorities for improvement.

The staff have had extensive training to improve the quality of teaching of mathematical reasoning. Pupils' books show considerable evidence of pupils answering more complex questions and having to explain how they have achieved their answers. This is deepening pupils' understanding of mathematics. The headteacher and the acting deputy headteacher have regularly monitored pupils' work to check that they are making good progress throughout the school.

The teaching staff have observed each other teach mathematics and provided valuable feedback to improve teaching further. They have planned lessons together, taking into account the pupils' needs. Consequently, teachers' use of assessment has developed and the quality of teaching has improved.

Most pupils are being given the opportunity to improve their work. For example, when a pupil in Class 4 explained a mathematical concept incorrectly, the pupil corrected his work using the appropriate mathematical vocabulary. Some teachers do not make enough checks that pupils have explained their answers well enough, however, to ensure that the pupils have fully understood the mathematical concept.

Pupils' ability to spell age-appropriate words has improved. Teachers have encouraged pupils to study the definitions of words and how they are spelt. A variety of learning activities have been provided for homework. At school, pupils have looked at synonyms of words to increase their vocabulary. The regular assessments of pupils' spelling ability show a marked improvement in pupils' spelling since September 2016.

Teachers have encouraged a love of reading among pupils. They organised a bedtime story event to encourage parents and pupils to share books at the school. Over 80 parents attended the event. Pupils read their school books regularly at home. Teachers discuss books with pupils and set questions for pupils to check their understanding of what they have read. Too many questions do not require pupils to develop their inference skills, however, and gain a deeper understanding of the texts that they have read, particularly for the most able. Leaders have recognised this and training to improve the teaching of reading has already been planned for

after the Easter break.

The governing body is asking leaders how the pupil premium funding is being allocated to improve the progress of disadvantaged pupils. However, school leaders have not checked closely enough to see if the extra support provided for disadvantaged pupils is used consistently and effectively to meet the needs of this group.

The school's behaviour policy has been revised and communicated to all pupils and staff. Training for staff has focused on how adults manage incidents of poor behaviour. The headteacher analyses each incident of poor behaviour to identify if there are any patterns. Pupils say that behaviour in school has improved this term.

However, there are still occasions where low-level disruption is evident. The school is continuing to work with a range of agencies to try to reduce the incidence of poor behaviour.

The children are making good progress in the early years. The teacher regularly checks the progress the children are making in all areas of learning. The children's writing has shown strong progress since the start of the academic year. The children are writing in sentences and using their phonics knowledge well to spell words. Parents are very positive about how their child has settled into school.

External support

The chief executive officer of the Learn Academies Trust has taken decisive action to improve the quality of leadership and teaching at the school. Following the resignations of the previous headteacher and of the teacher in Class 4, both positions were filled quickly with temporary staff. Moreover, the pace of improvement at the school has accelerated. The trust has provided support to improve the teaching of mathematics. The improved quality of the pupils' work this term demonstrates the positive impact of this training. The trust has also organised training for governors. This has benefited them greatly, and enabled the governing body to hold school leaders to account. The trust is successfully developing the school's capacity to improve the quality of education.

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

Yours sincerely

Martin Finch
Her Majesty's Inspector