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25 April 2017

Mrs Jane Tyers  
Headteacher  
St George's CofE Primary School  
Concord Place  
Salford  
Greater Manchester  
M6 6SJ

Dear Mrs Tyers

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to St George's CofE Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 17 March 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 first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in February 2016. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

At the section 5 inspection before the one that took place in February 2016, the school was also judged to require improvement.

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.

The school should take further action to:

- secure stronger progress in writing in key stage 1 by sharing good practice within the school
- sharply focus success measures in plans for improvement on the impact of actions on pupils' achievement.

### **Evidence**

During my visit I met with you and the school's children and families officer. I met with a group of three parents who shared their views about the school. I also met

with a group of pupils in Year 6 and talked informally throughout the day with other pupils. I spoke on the telephone with the local authority's school improvement adviser to discuss the action taken since the last inspection, and the level of support provided. I met with two members of the governing body, one of whom was a staff governor and the other a foundation governor, who was a member of the school effectiveness committee. I examined a variety of documentation, including the school's improvement plan, its self-evaluation summary, additional assessment documentation, minutes of governing body meetings, documents connected with safeguarding and records of lesson observations and work scrutiny. We also carried out a series of joint visits to classrooms to look at pupils' progress in English and mathematics. I also analysed a selection of pupils' books in Years 1 to 6.

## **Context**

Since the last inspection you have appointed an assistant headteacher to your senior leadership team, whose duties include overseeing the quality of provision for disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium. Your Year 6 teacher left the school before the summer of 2016, so the non-teaching deputy headteacher taught the class until the end of the school year. You then appointed a new Year 6 teacher, who has oversight of developing writing in the school.

## **Main findings**

You and your senior leaders are improving the quality of teaching and learning and outcomes for pupils. You recognise that there is still some inconsistency in progress, particularly in key stage 1 writing, but there is evidence of stronger progress in key stage 2, especially in writing and mathematics.

You have drawn up action plans that focus well on the key issues that were raised at the last inspection. You have also added actions based on your own analysis of the most recently-published assessment information, which indicated weaknesses in achievement in English and mathematics in key stage 1. You accepted, however, that you were not precise enough in some parts of the plan with regard to measuring the impact of your actions on pupils' achievement.

You took swift action to tackle some underperformance in teaching.

You moved quickly to commission a review of your use of the pupil premium funding and you have been putting its recommendations in place. For example, you have recently changed the school's feedback policy, so that there is a clearer focus on identifying the steps that pupils need to take to improve their work. The review also recognised the value of your appointment of a pupil premium leader, who has an overview of standards and the quality of provision for disadvantaged pupils. Evidence indicates that disadvantaged pupils, particularly in key stage 2, make improving progress, but that their progress is still inconsistent in key stage 1.

As a result of your actions, teachers are beginning to have higher expectations of

their pupils and there is evidence in key stage 2 of work that stretches pupils, including the disadvantaged and the most able. There are tasks in mathematics, for example, that give good opportunities for pupils to use reasoning skills, and teachers regularly provide extra challenges as part of the school's feedback policy. However, there was evidence in key stage 1 writing that the most able pupils do not yet have an understanding of more complex sentences, such as regularly using 'and' and other conjunctions to make two sentences into one.

You have taken steps to develop staff's confidence and subject knowledge in the teaching of writing. The Year 6 teacher, who has responsibility for supporting staff in teaching writing, has worked with less-confident teachers to develop their skills. There is clear improvement in key stage 2, as evidenced by the progress in pupils' books, while in key stage 1 there are early signs of improvement, but these have yet to develop fully.

You and your senior leaders carry out regular checks on the quality of teaching and learning. These take the form of lesson observations, the analysis of assessment information and work scrutiny. You give teachers feedback about their strengths and areas for development, and you make sure that the latter have been addressed the next time you carry out checks. You help staff who need to improve by providing appropriate training or support. These actions are beginning to be effective, as the progress of pupils in key stage 2 demonstrates, but there is still an inconsistency in the improvement in writing in key stage 1.

Your safeguarding records are thorough and fit for purpose, and your record of checks on members of staff is compliant.

I met with a group of Year 6 pupils and I also spoke with a group of Year 5 pupils on the playground. They told me they feel safe in school and they know whom to speak to if they have any worries. The Year 6 pupils said there had been a number of improvements since the last inspection, and that teachers now challenge them in their work and improve their confidence in, for example, mathematics.

Governors are clear about the school's priorities and they say that, since the last inspection, they have developed a better understanding of the quality of education that the school provides. They challenge you and your senior leaders rigorously, asking searching questions about pupils' achievement and how you are making sure that you bring about the necessary improvements.

The small group of parents who spoke with me were very positive about the school. They say that progress for their children has improved since the last inspection and consider their children to be safe in school. Parents feel the recent alterations to the building, which have given Year 1 pupils a classroom separate from the Reception classroom for the first time, allow their children to concentrate better on their work. They appreciate the range of extra-curricular activities you provide and say that you respond promptly and effectively to any concerns they have. Parents also say that their children love coming to school and that it feels 'like a family'.

### **External support**

The local authority has provided effective support to the school in order to raise standards. The positive impact of this is mainly in key stage 2, but there are signs of improvement developing in key stage 1.

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

Yours sincerely

Mark Quinn  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**