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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
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Mrs Philippa Leftley
Headteacher
Green Oak Church of England Primary School and Nursery
Franklyn Road
Godalming
Surrey
GU7 2LD

Dear Mrs Leftley

Special measures monitoring inspection of Green Oak Church of England Primary School and Nursery

Following my visit with Ali Dakin, Her Majesty's Inspector, to your school on 24–25 April 2018, 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 second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection that took place in January 2017. 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's action plan is fit for purpose.

The school may appoint one newly qualified teacher before the next monitoring inspection.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the interim executive board, the director of education for the Diocese of Guildford, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Surrey. This letter will be published on the Ofsted

website.

Yours sincerely

Clive Close
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection that took place in January 2017.

- Increase the impact of leadership and management by:
 - improving the accuracy of assessment so that it provides reliable information about the impact of teaching on pupils' progress in all year groups
 - ensuring that new systems for checking the quality of teaching are implemented in full quickly and rigorously
 - ensuring that the curriculum covers a wider range of subjects and that it prepares pupils better for life in modern Britain
 - checking the impact of the pupil premium grant on disadvantaged pupils' progress so that interventions that are not working can be changed in good time
 - ensuring that subject leaders monitor closely the progress pupils make in their subjects.
- Accelerate pupils' progress across the school by:
 - ensuring that teachers address clearly the skills, knowledge and understanding that pupils need to reach age-related expectations, particularly in English and mathematics
 - ensuring that teachers' planning takes account of the needs of all pupils, including the most able, disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities
 - ensuring that teachers' assessment of pupils' learning is accurate.
- Improve the rates of attendance of all pupils, in particular disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities so that they at least match national averages.
- Improve pupils' behaviour by eliminating low-level disruption in lessons and boisterous behaviour in open and outside areas.

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 to 25 April 2018

Evidence

During the inspection, inspectors visited every classroom and year group at least twice, assessing the progress pupils were making and talking to them about their learning. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms, as they moved around the school and at breaktimes. A wide range of meetings was held with senior and middle leaders, the chair of the interim executive board accompanied by two other board members, a representative of the diocesan board and a representative of the local authority, and a formal meeting was held with a representative group of pupils. In addition, the lead inspector held telephone conversations with representatives of the local authority and the diocesan board. Inspectors also talked to parents and carers at the start of each day. An extensive range of documents was scrutinised, including the school's action plan, minutes of meetings and notes of visits by the local authority, diocese and interim executive board. Other school records were checked, including attendance and behaviour records.

Context

Since the last inspection, the leadership team has remained stable. However, there has been a moderate degree of turnover in teaching and support staff. The local authority has recently announced an informal consultation regarding the possible closure of the school.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

- Leaders and those in positions of governance continue to work closely with the local authority and diocesan board to rectify the shortcomings identified at the last inspection. Partnerships have improved since the last monitoring inspection. This is having a positive impact on school improvement.
- The headteacher leads the school with tenacity and resilience. Her focus on motivating staff and improving standards has ensured an upward trajectory, despite continued uncertainty about the school's future. Parents are particularly positive about the impact the headteacher and other leaders are having on improving the school.
- Leaders are using assessment information more consistently. As time goes on, they are gaining a clearer picture of pupils' progress and attainment. This includes the progress of pupils from vulnerable groups. Leaders now need to ensure that they have a clearer understanding of the progress pupils are making over longer periods of time, as well as progress in subjects other than mathematics and English.
- Senior leaders have an increasingly accurate picture of the quality of teaching

and the impact this is having on pupils' progress across the school. This is enabling them to intervene and target support where it is needed most.

- Middle leaders are beginning to play a more consistent role in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. However, some subject leaders are more confident than others when identifying aspects of classroom practice that could be better, or when assessing the quality of pupils' work.
- Subject leadership across the wider curriculum is not as developed as it needs to be. This is partly due to the key priority of improving pupils' outcomes in mathematics and English. The headteacher is aware of this. Plans are in place to address this aspect of leadership ready for the start of the new school year.
- Pupils benefit from a full curriculum offer, but leaders know that the balance between subjects is not equitable. This will be a focus during the summer term, with carefully considered adjustments put in place to improve breadth and balance before the start of the new school year.
- The school's personal, social and health education (PSHE) scheme of work has developed well since being introduced. As a result, pupils have a clearer understanding of the school's values and are better prepared for life in modern Britain. One pupil explained to inspectors how she enjoyed PSHE lessons, and how she has learned to think more deeply about other people's views.
- Pupils enjoy a growing extra-curricular offer. They told inspectors that they appreciate the range of clubs on offer, including forest school, dance and drama.
- A review of the school's use of pupil premium funding has taken place since the last monitoring inspection. Leaders and those in positions of governance have found this useful. As a result, there is more focus on all aspects of provision for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. Leaders are also much more aware of the impact that funding is having on improving outcomes for pupils from this vulnerable group.
- Staff continue to benefit from a range of professional development opportunities. However, more work needs to be done to ensure that support staff are as effective as possible at supporting teaching and learning across the school. Leaders also need to ensure that key members of staff are appropriately trained to deliver the high-quality phonics lessons required for pupils to make rapid gains in their early reading skills.
- Despite uncertainties, the headteacher remains very focused on bringing about the improvements needed at Green Oak. She knows the school well. Her partnership with other leaders is strong. Self-evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses is honest. Improvement planning is fit for purpose, but now needs to evolve further, so that it focuses more acutely on the key priorities to improve the school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is improving overall, although there are inconsistencies between year groups and phases across the school. Leaders are aware of this. They know where teaching is stronger, or where teaching needs to be better, and take action to address weak teaching when required.
- Teachers are using the school's system to track pupils' progress increasingly well. This is particularly the case with teachers who have been at the school for longer, who are now more confident and accurate with their assessments.
- Leaders' monitoring of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is having a positive impact on improving classroom practice. Staff are more focused than before and have a better understanding of individual pupils' needs. This includes pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and those who have SEN and/or disabilities. As a consequence, pupils, including those from vulnerable groups, are making better progress than in the past.
- Teachers plan learning that meets the needs of pupils increasingly well. However, classroom visits and scrutiny of pupils' work showed inspectors that more needs to be done to ensure that most-able pupils are challenged appropriately.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

- Pupils' attitudes to school and learning have improved significantly since the school was found to require special measures in January 2017. Their behaviour has improved due to a number of factors, including higher expectations and a more consistent approach by staff, as well as improvements in the quality of teaching.
- Serious incidents of poor behaviour have reduced dramatically in the last year, as have exclusions. Disruptions to learning in classrooms are much less frequent, and are dealt with more effectively by staff. Pupils are less anxious or worried about the behaviour of others. They told inspectors that they feel safe in school.
- During the inspection, inspectors had no reason to be concerned about any aspect of the behaviour, welfare or safety of pupils. Parents, in particular, expressed positive views about the care afforded to their children by staff. All parents spoken to by inspectors feel that their children continue to be safe in school.
- Pupils' pastoral care is a strength of the school. The school's home-school link worker plays a significant part in ensuring that communication and relationships with parents are strong. Parents value the support that staff give to their children. They told inspectors that they trust leaders to deal with problems when they arise.
- Rates of absence continue to fall, although absence rates of pupils from

disadvantaged backgrounds remain higher than those of other pupils. Persistent absence has fallen dramatically. As a result, attendance levels, including attendance of pupils from vulnerable groups, have improved and broadly match national averages.

Outcomes for pupils

- Pupils' outcomes are improving. Leaders and staff are tracking the progress that pupils make more systematically and are now better placed to make meaningful comparisons between different pupil groups within the school, as well as with key national progress and attainment measures. This means that staff have a more realistic understanding of the school's performance overall and expectations are rising.
- Classroom visits and scrutiny of pupils' work showed inspectors that pupils' progress remains variable across the school. However, because leaders have a better understanding of the quality of teaching and learning and the impact this has on pupils' progress, they are better placed to intervene in order to boost outcomes for pupils.
- The school's own in-year data shows that, across different year groups and in different subjects, some pupils are making rapid progress. However, the legacy of underachievement, due to poor quality teaching in the past, means that many pupils will need to make accelerated and sustained progress over time in order to attain at levels expected for their age. This is particularly the case for older pupils as they move through key stage 2.
- Outcomes for children in the early years are also improving. Leaders' predictions for the proportion of children achieving a good level of development this year point to improvements in the quality of provision. Classroom visits by inspectors confirmed this view, although the low numbers in this year's cohort mean that comparisons with national averages are not meaningful.

External support

- At the time of this monitoring inspection, the school's future remains uncertain. Senior representatives of the local authority and diocesan board are very aware of the negative impact this is having on the morale of staff and the ability of leaders to concentrate their efforts on improving the school.
- Since the last inspection, officers from the local authority and diocese have focused their efforts on providing a more coordinated approach to supporting school leaders and the interim executive board. This has generated more capacity for the headteacher, in particular, and allowed her to draw on specialist expertise when required.
- Support and guidance from the headteacher of another local school continue to be helpful for senior leaders. The headteacher and chair of the interim executive

board agree that the support the school is currently receiving is both effective and proportionate.