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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Mrs Alison Flack
Executive Headteacher
Weston St Mary Church of England Primary School
Small Drove
Weston
Spalding
Lincolnshire
PE12 6HU

Dear Mrs Flack

Special measures monitoring inspection of Weston St Mary Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 20 to 21 November 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 July 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.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that the school may appoint newly qualified teachers.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, the director of

education for the Diocese of Lincoln, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Lincolnshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Helen Williams
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- Improve the quality of leadership by ensuring that:
 - high-quality senior leaders are in place
 - middle leaders are in place and are supported to develop the skills they need to be effective in their role
 - the school's use of additional funding, including the pupil premium, is monitored efficiently and addresses well the needs of pupils
 - the curriculum meets the needs of pupils, excites their interests and prepares them well for their next stage in education
 - governors have effective oversight and an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school
 - governors monitor the impact of external government funding, including the pupil premium, and make sure that eligible pupils benefit
 - external support is closely monitored and that it has the desired impact to improve the school at the accelerated pace that is needed.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and, therefore, pupils' outcomes, by:
 - ensuring that teachers plan activities that focus closely on what all pupils need to learn in order that they make good progress
 - rapidly improving the teaching of all subjects and particularly writing across the school, including in the early years.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by ensuring that:
 - an effective behaviour policy is in place and is understood and consistently applied by all staff in order to eradicate incidents of poor behaviour, both within and outside classrooms
 - pupils learn how to lead safe and healthy lives and are prepared for life in modern Britain.

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 use of the pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Report on the second monitoring inspection on 20 November 2018 to 21 November 2018

Evidence

The inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with: the executive headteacher; the head of school; the trust's chief executive officer, who is also chair of the governing body; two governors; the science coordinator and leaders for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) who are based at the partner school; the key stage 2 teacher, who is also a leader for English, and the school administration assistant. The inspector spoke with parents and carers and pupils. The inspector visited both classes and evaluated pupils' work. A range of documents were scrutinised, including the school's post-inspection action plans, the school's self-evaluation, behaviour logs and the current assessment information.

Context

Since the last monitoring visit, the school has appointed permanent teaching staff, in September 2018. The key stage 2 teacher is new to the school and the head of school is now teaching in early years and key stage 1. Two children joined the early years in September 2018, meaning the school has introduced the early years curriculum. The school's staff continue to work in close partnership with staff from Whaplode Church of England Primary School. Due to their increased capacity, delegated powers have been returned to the governing body from September 2018.

The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well above the national average. Considering there are only 30 pupils on roll, there is a disproportionately large proportion of pupils with SEND.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The executive headteacher and the head of school have maintained their strong leadership since the last monitoring visit. They successfully appointed a full complement of teachers for September 2018 and have begun the academic year in a position of stability. The new teacher in key stage 2 has provided additional leadership capacity, taking on shared responsibility for English. Leaders have strengthened middle leadership through further collaboration with the partner school. The expertise of the leader of the provision for pupils with SEND is shared across the two schools, providing advice and support for staff.

Staff at the two schools work together to plan and develop the curriculum. However, leaders have analysed carefully the needs of pupils at this school, which has led to further curriculum redevelopment. Leaders have recognised that some pupils lack the characteristics of learning typically developed in early years. As a result, the head of school has designed an outdoor curriculum for pupils in all years

to develop their resilience, independence and perseverance. A recent outdoor learning day provided pupils with opportunities to problem solve and collaborate through building dens and making rope swings.

Leaders have a good overview of the needs of pupils with SEND. They have developed good links with families and use their wealth of knowledge in the field to ensure that the needs of pupils and families are met. Leaders have a good understanding of the needs of disadvantaged pupils. The targeted in-class support by teachers is closing gaps in pupils' learning. While there is a high proportion of disadvantaged pupils at the school, and because group sizes are small, governors carefully monitor the progress made by individual pupils. However, due to some weaker teaching in the past, some pupils have not make as much progress as they could.

The hands-on approach of the governing board has ensured that governors have a good understanding of the challenges faced by the school. Governors' use of the school's assessment information has enabled them to have a good understanding of the progress pupils are making, and the wide range of pupils' needs. They understand the complex needs of pupils at the school and are committed to providing staff and pupils with the support they need.

The recent appointment of staff meets safer recruitment procedures. The school's single central register is up to date, which the trust regularly checks.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Teachers plan carefully to meet the needs of the different age groups and abilities. They are mindful of the expectations of the curriculum for all pupils taught in mixed-year group classes. Teachers plan activities to help develop pupils' problem-solving skills and independence. For example, during the inspection the whole school was participating in a 'jelly bean maths day'. Pupils in key stage 1 were estimating and then investigating how many jelly beans it would take to fill different containers. The teachers developed this further to consider how many more beans would fit into one container when compared with another. In key stage 2, pupils were estimating the height of landmarks in jelly beans or calculating proportions of beans as fractions.

Topics are used to develop pupils' skills across the curriculum, making links where possible. Key stage 1 pupils' learning about 'Stick Man' by Julia Donaldson made stick bundles to count in twos, fives and 10s. Pupils in key stage 2 were learning about Mayan culture through the theme of chocolate. Trips and visits enhance the curriculum, such as a trip to Cadbury World or to the seaside.

While there are only two children in early years, adults plan activities specifically for these children to ensure that teaching meets the requirements of the early years curriculum. Children are encouraged to be independent in their learning, yet adults

are available to offer support, develop thinking and stimulate learning when necessary. Adults are keen to ensure that children's learning follows their interests and they incorporate these into learning activities. For example, children made musical instruments to investigate which makes a louder noise, rice or jelly beans.

The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above the national average. These pupils are supported well and make good progress in their development of spoken English, enabling them to access learning.

Sometimes, teachers do not have a secure enough understanding of the needs of some pupils. Tasks set do not always meet the needs of all learners or provide them with appropriate challenge. Teachers' expectations of pupils' handwriting and presentation are sometimes too low.

In writing, some pupils are still working below the school's expectations. Teachers plan to develop pupils' skills; however, occasionally, the work set for pupils does not provide them with enough opportunity to develop their own writing style and apply their skills. Teachers over-support pupils' writing, which sometimes restricts the amount of progress they make. Pupils' books show that the curriculum provides them with opportunities to write across all subjects. However, sometimes teachers' expectations of writing in the wider curriculum are not as high as when pupils write in their English books.

Generally, adults provide effective support for pupils with SEND through the use of additional resources and well-planned tasks. However, occasionally, teachers do not plan for pupils' needs carefully enough, and a small number of pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Around the school, pupils behave well. They are polite and kind to one another. They are happy to talk about their learning and are enthusiastic about their school. Incidents of undesirable behaviour are now rare and have reduced significantly since the last inspection.

Leaders have helped to develop pupils' aspirations. Through the reinforcement of the school's values, pupils are developing their understanding of learning and life skills. Pupils talk about what they want to be when they leave school. Examples were to be a train driver, a music teacher or an astronaut.

Pupils understand that all people are different, for example saying 'they should accept people for who they are'. Pupils learn about different religions and know there are similarities and differences between them. Pupils learn about significant events in the world and Britain. For example, displays around the school showed that pupils had been learning about the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War.

Parents say that the school has improved significantly since the last inspection. They believe their children are happy and are making progress. Parents of pupils new to the school, including pupils who speak English as an additional language, say they settle well and that staff provide them with information about how well their children are doing.

The proportion of pupils who have consistently positive attitudes to learning is increasing. However, a small proportion of pupils still do not show enough resilience in their learning. They are easily distracted and are not self-motivated to get back to work. This is particularly the case when teachers' expectations of individual pupils are not high enough, or learning is not planned well enough to support their needs.

Outcomes for pupils

The number of pupils in a cohort are very small: in Year 6 in 2018, each pupil accounted for 25%. In 2019, there are to be three pupils in Year 6. As a result, comparisons with national figures are statistically unreliable. Due to a legacy of weak teaching, there are still gaps in pupils' knowledge. However, the school's own assessment information shows that pupils are making stronger progress than in the past in reading, writing and mathematics. However, for some pupils this was not enough for them to achieve the expected standard.

Due to turbulence in teaching in the last academic year, some pupils did not make as much progress as expected in learning phonics. However, since the changes in staffing, pupils are making strong progress.

Pupils' books show that several are still working below the school's expectations. Pupils are making stronger progress than they have in the past. However, due to some poor teaching over time, some pupils still have some way to go to catch up with their peers.

There were no children in early years in 2018.

External support

The trust continues to provide support for the school through the trust's education adviser. This includes regular monitoring visits, as well as bespoke support when required, depending on emerging priorities. The school also works closely with the partnership school to share expertise and provide bespoke support and share good practice when required.