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13 February 2019

Miss Emma Lowe  
Headteacher  
Kirby Hill Church of England Primary School  
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Dear Miss Lowe

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Kirby Hill Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 5 February 2019, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the monitoring 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 monitoring inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 and has taken place because the school has received two successive judgements of requires improvement at its previous section 5 inspections.

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

The school should take further action to:

- ensure that the school's systems and procedures to assess the standards pupils reach and the progress they make are reliable
- collect and analyse information about pupils' behaviour in lessons so that trends can be identified, addressed and reported to governors.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, discussions were held with you, the subject leaders for English and mathematics, the coordinator for pupils with special educational needs

and/or disabilities (SENCo), the governing body, and representatives of the local authority and the Church of England Diocese of Leeds to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. The inspector also met with parents at the start of the school day and a group of pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6. The school improvement plan was evaluated. You and I carried out joint observations of teaching, learning and assessment throughout key stage 2.

## **Context**

The assistant headteacher left the school at the end of the summer term. Senior leaders remodelled the workforce. The senior leadership team now includes you and two senior teachers.

The constitution of the governing body has changed, too. Five new governors were appointed in the 2017/18 academic year, as well as a new chair of the governing body. Following the chair's resignation, a new chair was appointed at the beginning of the autumn term 2018, alongside two new parent governors. One foundation governor resigned at the end of the autumn term 2018 and has been replaced. Currently, there are no vacancies on the governing body.

## **Main findings**

You have a very secure knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for development and are leading the actions required to improve outcomes for pupils well.

Subject leaders are playing an increasingly important role in school improvement. For example, the mathematics leader evaluates the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the subject she leads incisively. She takes immediate action to address identified shortcomings. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics is improving rapidly. Pupils, throughout the school, are growing increasingly adept at manipulating numbers. They enjoy using their knowledge to reason and solve mathematical problems. The subject leader ensures that mathematics has high status in school. Pupils rate their teachers' expertise in teaching mathematics highly.

The senior teacher with responsibility for English has implemented initiatives to improve the standard of spelling and punctuation in writing, and inference and deduction in reading, since she took up post at the beginning of September. Pupils' writing is showing improvement from the beginning of the academic year. For example, in Year 1 pupils are now writing longer pieces of well-punctuated work, in which most words are spelled correctly. At the time of this inspection, there had been no analysis of the impact of the leader's work on standards in reading. This leader is not confident that the reading and writing assessments in the school's records are accurate.

The SENCo carried out a root and branch review of the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) during the autumn term 2018. Pupils with SEND are making much better progress because their provision is closely matched to their needs. Parents are pleased to be fully involved in the regular reviews of their children's progress. The SENCo has identified, quite correctly, that staff need further training in writing effective plans, containing measurable targets, to support the needs of pupils with SEND.

Disadvantaged pupils are also making better progress than previously. In addition, there is no difference between the attendance of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils in school. All attend school more often than their peers nationally. Following the last inspection, leaders commissioned an external review of the school's use of pupil premium funding in a timely manner. Members of the newly constituted governing body have noted the areas for further development in the review and are challenging senior leaders accordingly.

Governance, after a period of turmoil, is becoming increasingly stable. Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Their awareness of their roles and responsibilities is developing. Governors carry out regular visits to school to check on the progress of improvement actions that are identified in the school's improvement planning. They find it difficult to evaluate the success of leaders' actions incisively because there are so few measures for success in the school's plans. Governors have not asked for trends in pupils' behaviour to be reported by you. They are unable to evaluate this aspect of the school's work effectively.

Pupils generally behave well in and around school. However, in lessons in which teachers have not used their knowledge of pupils' skills and abilities well to plan challenging work, some pupils lose interest and do not give of their best. Pupils told the inspector that other pupils' chattering in lessons sometimes disturbs their learning.

You are aware that the school's assessment systems and procedures require further development. There is a tension between leaders' use of test results and use of teachers' assessments. These two different forms of assessment often differ widely for individual pupils. In lessons, teachers' use of assessment information to plan work for pupils is inconsistent. In year groups where there is effective use of assessment information, coupled with high expectations, pupils are making much better progress in reading, writing and mathematics. In other year groups, teachers miss opportunities to develop pupils' learning rapidly. The extent to which teachers offer clear explanations to pupils also remains inconsistent across the school.

### **External support**

Officers from the local authority and Church of England Diocese of Leeds carried out a joint review of the school's effectiveness during the spring term 2018. The local

authority's English and mathematics advisers have supported the school's subject leaders well. In addition, an external consultant is providing effective support for you and other senior leaders.

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

Yours sincerely

Belita Scott  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**