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Kay Corley  
Headteacher  
William de Yaxley Church of England Academy  
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Dear Mrs Corley

**Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to William de Yaxley Church of England Academy**

Following my visit to your school on 13 May 2021, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the monitoring 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 to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The monitoring inspection was carried out under section 8(2) 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.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the 2020-21 COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. I discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in my evaluation.

Having considered the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time:

**Leaders and those responsible for governance are taking effective action in order for the school to become a good school.**

The school should take further action to:

- ensure that all curriculum leaders have the knowledge and expertise they need to support teachers to implement the planned curriculum effectively.

## **Context**

Leaders have maintained their focus on improvement despite the challenges posed by COVID-19. Leaders ensured that during the spring term of 2021, the planned curriculum continued to be taught to all pupils.

Since the inspection in February 2020, there have been changes in senior leadership. The head of school left in July 2020 and has not been replaced. The assistant headteacher has taken on some additional responsibilities and is acting deputy headteacher. All class teachers are responsible for leadership of at least one subject area. For many, this is a new responsibility.

## **Main findings**

You have put in place suitable plans and actions to address the areas for improvement identified in the February 2020 inspection. You have worked alongside governors and the Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust (DEMAT, the trust). You have maintained a focus on improving the quality of education provided. Staff have received the training that they need. Almost all staff feel well supported and recognise the improvements in the school since February 2020.

Following the inspection in February 2020, leaders began a review of the existing curriculum. Leaders introduced new curriculum plans in art, geography, history and science in September 2020. Curriculum leaders have identified the important knowledge that pupils should learn. Leaders have organised knowledge in an order to support pupils' learning. However, gaps in pupils' knowledge remain. Curriculum leaders have not yet checked on how well their new plans support better learning.

Curriculum leaders are at different stages of development in their role. They have a clear vision for what they want pupils to achieve in their subjects. Staff have received training. This is to help them deliver the curriculum effectively. Some teachers require further support with this.

Pupils have opportunities to practise and develop their ability to write for different purposes. These opportunities do not consistently check pupils' understanding of subject knowledge. Teachers and leaders do not always know what pupils have learned.

Staff have received training to teach reading effectively. Leaders are providing further support for those teachers who need it. The adults who support the weakest readers are knowledgeable. They provide effective support to help pupils read more fluently and understand what they read. Almost all pupils spoken to said that they enjoy reading.

Leaders' chosen approach to teaching mathematics has now become well developed across the school. Staff have received training to support this. Teachers regularly

challenge pupils to think more deeply. Most teachers revisit important knowledge. They use regular checks on pupils' understanding to adapt what they do in lessons. There are still occasions when teachers move on to more challenging learning before pupils are ready to do so. This hinders pupils' progress in their learning. Leaders continue to provide guidance to support the teaching of mathematics.

Since the most recent inspection, the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) has reviewed the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). She has ensured that guidance and training is in place to help all staff support the learning of pupils with SEND. The SENCo ensures that teachers and other adults know what works well for individual pupils to help them learn and so adults can make adaptations in their planning, when required.

Governors know where improvements have been made and where there is still work to do. Governors challenge leaders effectively to make sure that leaders' actions are making a difference and are in pupils' best interests.

### **Additional support**

The DEMAT school performance director meets regularly with school leaders. There is a high level of challenge, which has helped focus improvement activities within the school. This has enabled leaders to reflect on how effective their actions have been. It has helped leaders to consider the next steps in improvement.

Curriculum leaders take part in training provided by the trust. They participate in subject networks established across DEMAT schools. Curriculum leaders view this support positively. It has helped with developing curriculum plans and supported curriculum leaders' understanding of their roles.

The deputy headteacher and another mathematics specialist have undergone training with the Cambridgeshire mathematics hub. This has been used to develop further the school's chosen approach to teaching mathematics.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, I held meetings with the headteacher, the chief executive officer, the school performance director and the director of education of DEMAT, pupils, the curriculum leaders for English, mathematics, science and humanities, and members of the local governing body, to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection.

I carried out visits to lessons, looked at pupils' work in a range of subjects, reviewed documentation, including the school development plan and self-evaluation document, and reviewed documents and records relating to safeguarding. I reviewed 49 responses to the online parent survey, Ofsted Parent View, including

nine free-text responses received since the additional monitoring inspection in March 2021. I considered the 11 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer or equivalent of DEMAT, the director of education for the Diocese of Ely, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Cambridgeshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Paul Wilson  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**