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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
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Barney Rycroft
Interim headteacher
Stoke St Gregory Church of England Primary School
Stoke St Gregory
Huntham Lane
Taunton
Somerset
TA3 6EG

Dear Mr Rycroft

Requires improvement monitoring inspection of Stoke St Gregory Church of England Primary School

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection of your school that took place on 20 January 2023, on behalf of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills. The monitoring inspection was carried out under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005 and took place because the school has received two successive judgements of requires improvement at its previous graded (section 5) inspections.

During the inspection, I discussed with you and other senior leaders, governors and the local authority the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent graded inspection. We discussed the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. I also carried out visits to lessons and held meetings with subject leaders. I considered a range of documents, including the school improvement plan. I met with pupils to discuss their learning and heard a selection of pupils read. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

Stoke St Gregory Church of England Primary School continues to require improvement. Leaders have made progress to improve the school, but more work is necessary for the school to become good.

The school should take further action to:

- ensure that the support for pupils in key stage 2, who are in the early stages of reading, is precisely focused on the gaps in their knowledge; and

- provide a well-sequenced curriculum which helps pupils to gain detailed knowledge in each of the foundation subjects.

Main findings

An interim headteacher joined the school in November 2022, as part of a supportive arrangement with The Oak Partnership Trust, a multi-academy trust. As part of the same arrangement, a special educational needs coordinator has joined the school on a temporary basis.

Since the previous inspection, leaders have acted swiftly and effectively in order to improve the quality of the curriculum for early reading. Children now make rapid progress in the Reception Year. However, there is not a sharp enough focus on remedying the gaps in pupils' phonics knowledge for pupils in key stage 2 who continue to find reading difficult. Leaders have strengthened the curriculum in several other subjects, including personal, social and health education and physical education. Nevertheless, it is not yet the case that the curriculum in every subject is designed well.

Curriculum leadership is improving. Increasingly, subject leaders are planning how they can best support all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, to know and remember more. The interim headteacher provides assured leadership. This is helping staff to put improved systems and processes into place. For example, the impact of the curriculum is now evaluated more rigorously. Governors are considerate of staff workload, given the rapid pace of change. Leaders and governors are working constructively together to address the school's weaknesses.

Leaders have received support from the Somerset Literacy Network. They have used this guidance to improve the curriculum in both early reading and English. The Oak Partnership Trust provides considerable support for the leadership of the school. Governors ensure that this additional capacity is put to good use. As a result, the rate of improvement has increased significantly.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Diocese of Bath and Wells, the Department for Education's regional director and the director of children's services for Somerset. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Lydia Pride
His Majesty's Inspector