

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



26 April 2023

Nick Kiddle
Headteacher
St Michael's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Lyme Regis
Kings Way
Lyme Regis
Dorset
DT7 3DY

Dear Nick Kiddle

Requires improvement monitoring inspection of St Michael's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Lyme Regis

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection of your school that took place on 26 April 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 your staff, governors and a representative of 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 visited lessons and coaching sessions, heard some pupils reading and looked at a sample of work. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

St Michael's continues to require improvement. Leaders have made progress to improve the school, but more work is necessary for the school to become good.

Main findings

There have been some changes in staffing since the last inspection. Some staff have changed roles within the school.

The newly introduced approach to teaching mathematics is proving effective. The curriculum is now well sequenced. The teaching resources used are well aligned to it. This is helping pupils to deepen their understanding and make links to what they have learned before. There is now a clear and consistent structure for phonics teaching, which is

making a significant difference to how well pupils learn to read. Staff are developing the expertise they need to teach reading well. Further work is needed to ensure that all staff teach this with the precision required. Pupils who are at risk of falling behind get the help they need to catch up with their peers.

You are implementing a new school-wide curriculum for all subjects. The new curriculum is more ambitious about what pupils will learn. All teaching staff are now trained in the new curriculum. Staff are working enthusiastically to implement it. Some aspects of this new curriculum are not yet fully developed. For example, some staff do not have as much knowledge of the curriculum that they need in order to support pupils effectively.

You have prioritised the order in which you are improving the areas of weakness identified at the previous inspection. You are doing this in a way that takes account of staff workload. Governors understand the priority areas for improvement and have enabled leaders to focus on these. However, leaders' plans are not always clear enough about the expected impact of action they take. As a result, governors are not able to hold leaders to account to the extent that they could.

You and your staff have benefited from a range of external support and challenge. Work with the local authority and local subject 'Hubs' and the diocese is supporting staff to develop the curriculum.

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

Yours sincerely

Sarah Favager-Dalton
His Majesty's Inspector