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Louise Withers  
Headteacher  
Shottery St Andrew's CofE Primary School  
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Warwickshire  
CV37 9BL

Dear Mrs Withers

### **Serious weaknesses monitoring inspection of Shottery St Andrew's CofE Primary School**

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 10 October 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 was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses following the graded (section 5) inspection that took place in December 2022.

The purpose of a monitoring inspection is not to grade the school's overall effectiveness, but to identify and report on the school's progress. It is to highlight to the school and parents any improvements that school leaders have made since the school's previous graded inspection.

During the inspection, I discussed with you and other senior leaders, governors and representatives 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 reviewed safeguarding records, visited lessons, spoke to staff and pupils, observed pupils' behaviour and scrutinised curriculum documentation. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

**Leaders have made progress to improve the school, but more work is necessary for the school to be no longer judged as having serious weaknesses.**

**The progress made towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation.**

You joined the school as headteacher in April 2023. You wasted no time in getting to grips

with the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection report. You have set a clear and ambitious vision for the school. This has been shared with staff, pupils, governors and parents. You are determined that all pupils will receive the quality of education they deserve. In a relatively short time, you and your staff have remained focused on bringing about further improvement. You are achieving this steadily through the actions you are taking. Nevertheless, the improvements made have been brought about by a small number of staff. Although improving, leadership capacity is underdeveloped.

You have invested in a new programme to improve the teaching of early reading and raise outcomes. All staff have received appropriate training to deliver high-quality lessons. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure. They adhere closely to the progressive structure of the programme which provides pupils with the opportunity to practise reading and writing the sounds they learn. Books now match the phonics that pupils are learning. However, the implementation of phonics remains variable. When the pace is too slow, some pupils disengage and become restless. This impacts the progress they make.

You and your staff have worked hard to reshape and improve the curriculum in all subjects. You provide subject leaders with time so that they can monitor the implementation and impact of their subject area and provide any support needed. Staff have received a range of curriculum training and input to help develop their subject knowledge. Some have also visited other schools to observe good practice and discuss how to plan effectively for mixed-aged classes. A clear curriculum structure is in place for all subjects, including in the early years curriculum. However, further work is needed to identify precisely what knowledge, skills and vocabulary pupils will learn, in all subjects, as they progress from Reception Year to Year 6.

You are working closely with, and supporting the leadership for, special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to improve provision for pupils with SEND. Staff training is helping teachers to ensure that they have the knowledge and skills to adapt learning opportunities and use different strategies to support pupils effectively. You have shown your commitment to this area by providing time for the coordinator to carry out this role and attend training to achieve the relevant qualification. Provision has been reviewed and is beginning to be more focused. This includes the use of adult support and specific resources to meet pupils' needs.

Pupils and staff are unanimous that behaviour is improving. This is a direct result of the implementation of a revised and effective behaviour policy. You have raised expectations of pupil behaviour and ensured that staff implement the policy consistently. Pupils have a clear understanding of the school's rules and the consequences of any inappropriate behaviour. Systems introduced allow staff and leaders to record and monitor types and frequencies of behaviour. This provides an opportunity to intervene earlier and detect any emerging patterns or triggers. You have applied the same tenacity to improving attendance and reducing persistent absence. You are relentless in following up on all absences. These are tracked, and actions taken show that attendance figures are improving and fewer pupils are persistently absent, including the most vulnerable.

Governors have continued to demonstrate strong commitment and support for the school despite the challenges presented in the last few years. Since the previous inspection, they have sought support from the local authority and responded positively and proactively to the inspection findings. They now have a more focused approach to school improvement and are working in close partnership with you as headteacher. Governors are more informed about all aspects of the school than previously. This is because they are now fully involved in monitoring the work of the school and carefully evaluating the impact of actions taken.

Staff feel valued and appreciate the renewed drive and direction you have brought to the school. They are committed to the vision shared because of the supportive culture you have created. Staff welcome the improved systems and processes introduced. They appreciate the training and consultation they receive. You keep a close eye on staff's workload and well-being and ensure staff are given time to undertake any additional roles required and involve them in decisions made.

Safeguarding is now effective, and you are establishing a stronger culture of safeguarding practice in the school. Staff receive regular and detailed training about safeguarding processes and procedures. You have introduced a more robust recording system to track and monitor concerns raised about pupils at risk of harm. All staff have access to this system and know how to report any observations or incidents. However, greater clarity and precision are still needed in recording what action is taken following reports raised. Information is now sought and collected from pupils' previous schools when they transfer to Shotton St Andrew's. Visitors are suitably checked on arrival and issued with visitor lanyards and recently produced safeguarding leaflets.

Since the last inspection, you and the chair of governors have actively sought input from the local authority to help improve the school. You have welcomed the support provided to review areas such as safeguarding and governance. As a result of report findings, you have a sharper focus on the key priorities and have been able to address key weaknesses more rapidly. Staff have also benefited from working with the early years advisory team to create a more enabling environment for children in Reception Year and developing the early years curriculum.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of governors, the director of education for the Diocese of Coventry, the Department of Education's regional director and the director of children's services for Warwickshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Heather Simpson  
**His Majesty's Inspector**