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Paul Martin
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Martin

Monitoring inspection of a school not in a category of concern of St Hild's Church of England School

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 16 September 2025, 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 meets the monitoring threshold as set out in the [Monitoring Inspection Handbook](#).

The purpose of a monitoring inspection is not to grade the school's key and (where applicable) provision judgements, 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, the chief executive officer (CEO) of the trust, the chair of trustees and the chair of the local governing body 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 visited lessons, spoke with pupils and staff and scrutinised school documentation, including the school development plan and behaviour and attendance records. I also looked at safeguarding records, including the school's single central record. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

Leaders have made progress to improve the school, but some aspects of the school need further improvement.

The school should take further action to:

- Improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils.

- Improve the behaviour of pupils who are persistently disruptive.

Main findings

Since the last inspection, there have been changes in school leadership. An interim headteacher was appointed in September 2024 and you took up post as the substantive headteacher in September 2025. A new chair of the local governing body was appointed in September 2025, the third person to hold this position since the last inspection. In January 2025, the school increased the capacity of the leadership team with the appointment of an additional deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher.

The school is improving the quality of education. It has provided subject leaders with an intensive professional development programme. This programme has equipped subject leaders with the knowledge and skills they need to lead improvement in their subject areas. Teachers have received professional development in pedagogy and pedagogical content knowledge. The school has developed a research-based pedagogical model. Teachers use this model to structure learning effectively. They have a secure subject knowledge. However, the school is aware that further work is required to ensure that teachers adapt their teaching to deepen and extend pupils' learning. It knows that it needs to make further significant improvement to reach national levels of attainment and progress.

The school, supported by the trust, has acted with appropriate urgency to address the areas of improvement identified at the last inspection. Since the last inspection, the school has experienced high levels of staff absence and instability in school leadership. However, the trust has provided additional leadership capacity and commissioned extensive external support for the school. Trustees have played a central role in holding the school to account. School leaders show a commitment to improving provision so that all pupils have every opportunity to succeed.

The school has high expectations of pupils' behaviour and attendance. It has developed a clear set of rewards and sanctions and additional provision to support pupils vulnerable to exclusion. However, the behaviour policy is not always applied consistently and there is a significant minority of pupils whose behaviour is persistently disruptive. Levels of exclusion and suspension began to decline during 2024/25. However, they remain significantly high. The school's work on attendance is having some impact. Persistent absence is declining, although it remains high for disadvantaged pupils. To improve behaviour and attendance further, the school needs to implement its behaviour and attendance policies with greater rigour and consistency.

The school engages with a wide range of external partners, including a multi-academy trust and a secondary school. This has supported the school in developing leadership and improving the quality of education. It has also provided advice and guidance about attendance and behaviour strategies. The school values the support that these external partners provide. The school is part of the Department for Education's regional

improvement for standards and excellence (RISE) programme. The school's participation in the programme began at the start of this academic year.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, and the CEO of the NEAT Academy Trust, the director of education for the Diocese of Durham, the Department for Education's regional director and the director of children's services for Hartlepool. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Ian Rawstone
His Majesty's Inspector