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Mrs Gill Booth

Acting Headteacher

Ian Ramsey Church of England Aided Comprehensive School

Greens Lane

Fairfield

Stockton-on-Tees

County Durham

TS18 5AJ

Dear Mrs Booth

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Ian Ramsey Church of England Aided Comprehensive School**

Following my visit to your school on 3 July 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in March 2014.

### **Evidence**

During this inspection, meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body, other governors, representatives of both the local authority and the Diocese and senior leaders from both Ian Ramsey and the Venerable Bede Church of England Academy. A tour of the school was undertaken and the local authority's statement of action and the school's improvement plan were evaluated.

## **Context**

The Chair of the Governing Body stepped down following the inspection and the headteacher left the school at the end of May. The acting headteacher who is currently leading the school is also the headteacher at the Venerable Bede. Three out of seven senior leaders are leaving the school at the end of this term and one senior leader is on maternity leave. Fifteen teachers are also leaving this summer.

The school will move into a new building on the same site in September. There are plans for Ian Ramsey to become an academy, sponsored by the Venerable Bede Multi-Academy Trust. Approval and a date for conversion are awaited from the Department for Education.

## **The quality of leadership and management at the school**

Governors have acted quickly to take the school forward. They have formed a School Improvement Committee made up of governors from both Ian Ramsey and the Venerable Bede and including representatives from the local authority, the diocese and parents. The committee has a good blend of skills and is focused solely on the areas for improvement identified at the inspection. It has met weekly to provide effective support and robust challenge to school leaders. Changes to the governing body mean that the external review of governance has not yet taken place but is scheduled for the autumn term. Meanwhile, governor training has continued and the governors from the Venerable Bede, who joined the governing body after the inspection, bring additional expertise and experience.

The acting headteacher has a proven track record in school improvement and is driving the plans forward at a lively and accelerating pace. She is highly visible around the school and is raising expectations and building confidence. She prioritises very well and is tackling the root causes of the school's problems in order to build for the long term. Senior leaders from other schools are working effectively alongside the Ian Ramsey team to get new initiatives underway quickly by sharing and adapting good practice.

The school improvement plan effectively underpins the developments. It is a well-used document that is regularly updated and provides both governors and school leaders with the evidence they need to monitor progress and evaluate the impact of action taken.

The local authority has worked with the school to audit and review the use of pupil premium funding. An external review is planned in the autumn but changes have already been made to the way that pupil premium funding is spent, providing a greater focus on individual students' needs and a more thorough evaluation of the impact.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose.

The school's improvement plan is fit for purpose.

The school may appoint a newly qualified teacher in music before the next monitoring inspection but any additional appointments of newly qualified teachers must be discussed with me beforehand.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Stockton-on-Tees and the Diocese of Durham. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jan Bennett  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**