

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



5 October 2017

Mrs Sue Brindley  
St George's CofE Controlled Primary School  
Church Street  
Church Gresley  
Swadlincote  
Derbyshire  
DE11 9NP

Dear Mrs Brindley

**Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to St George's CofE Controlled Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 21 September 2017, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in April 2017. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection in order for the school to become a good school.

The school should take further action to ensure that:

- leaders publish as soon as possible, and by October half term at the latest, the impact of pupil premium funding for last year, along with a clear plan for this year's planned expenditure
- by the end of the autumn term 2017, the headteacher provides the governing body with specific information about the progress and attainment of the most able pupils for the different year groups in the school
- leaders and governors update their list of policies and procedures, setting out a timetable as to when each will be reviewed, and by which committee.

## **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior and subject leaders, and members of the governing body to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I held a telephone conversation regarding the school's improvement with a representative of the local authority. I evaluated the action and improvement plans and undertook a scrutiny of pupils' work. I examined the recent external reviews of governance and the school's use of the pupil premium funding. I also toured the school with you to see lessons taking place in different classes, met pupils and members of staff, and examined the school's records of safeguarding checks. I examined anonymised details of the performance management of a selection of teaching staff.

## **Context**

Since the previous inspection, a number of new appointments have been made to the governing body, including a new chair and vice-chair. One of the teachers employed at the school at the time of the previous inspection has now been appointed to the post of deputy headteacher. Another has been appointed as the coordinator for key stage 1.

## **Main findings**

In the short time since the previous inspection, you have taken brisk action to begin to address the key areas for improvement identified by inspectors. You, along with governors, have written an effective action plan that fully encompasses these areas, along with a number of other areas you also judge to be important. The school development plan now includes headline targets for pupils' outcomes at the end of the current academic year. You are aiming for the proportions of pupils who meet the expectations for their ages to be in line with national expectations.

Following the recent inspection, the governing body wasted no time in commissioning a review of governance. This review was both detailed and precise in its findings and proposals, and has been of great help to governors. It set out the consequences of the governing body being wholly comprised of recent members, with three of these appointed since the inspection. Therefore, it stated, a range of key actions needed to be taken briskly. Governors have either already implemented these or are in the process of doing so.

Governors fully recognise that they currently do not possess extensive levels of knowledge of primary education, and many of them are still getting to grips with understanding information on pupils' progress. Nevertheless, they are enthusiastic and determined to learn, and have taken good first steps to improve their effectiveness. The chair and vice-chair have received training in their new roles, and two new committees, resources and curriculum, have been established with clear

terms of reference. Governors have also appointed members on their body with particular responsibility for specific areas, including for English, mathematics and for disadvantaged pupils. They are meeting with subject leaders to review the progress pupils are making, and the next actions that will be required. The chair of governors meets on a weekly basis with you to ensure that he is building up a clear and accurate picture of the school's strengths, and to review what is being done to tackle the key areas for improvement.

You, as headteacher, have wisely taken the decision not to give the governing body excessively detailed levels of information immediately. Instead, you are sensibly supplying them with a useful overview of, for example, the proportions of pupils who have attained a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year; the proportions who have passed the phonics screening check in Year 1; and assessment and test results at Year 2 and Year 6. This information shows the outcomes for pupils overall, and for disadvantaged pupils, so that governors can see how highly both groups of pupils have attained. You plan to follow this with a more detailed booklet which will show the progress that pupils are making in all year groups. You are helpfully assisting governors by highlighting for them the areas of pupils' underperformance within this information. This will guide them to ask you the right questions about the reasons for these areas, and the impact of the staff's work to address them. Very recent minutes of the governing body meetings confirm that they are beginning to ask questions of senior leaders about pupils' outcomes. The information you are supplying to governors does not, at present, contain data on the progress of the most able pupils, however. You agree that it will be essential to provide this to the governing body in order that they can be assured that higher-attaining pupils are making the rapid progress of which they are capable.

The new coordinator for key stage 1 and the deputy headteacher have both attended recent training to help them analyse pupils' performance so that they can now support governors, and their colleagues, in gaining an effective view of where pupils are making good gains, along with any groups which are falling behind. Both these teachers are supporting colleagues who are new to the profession, or who are less confident, to improve their teaching. In addition, the key stage 1 coordinator has already reviewed the school's system of teaching phonics to ensure that there is a continuous and consistently effective approach throughout key stage 1. The deputy headteacher's responsibility includes coordinating the provision for disadvantaged pupils. She is fully aware of the need to ensure that she supplies governors with information about the provision for, and outcomes of, the most able disadvantaged pupils.

Like you, the subject leaders for mathematics and for English understand the need to check that the assessments that their colleagues make of what children can do are consistently accurate. They are supporting them to do this well, so that governors can be reassured that the judgements teachers make are increasingly precise and that no child is left behind. These judgements are being entered on to a new tracking system that all teachers are using. The system highlights any pupils

not making sufficient progress from their starting points, so that teachers know where to adjust their planning.

You and the governors ensured that you commissioned the review of spending of the pupil premium without delay following the previous inspection. The action plan, which is close to being finalised, is both comprehensive and well structured. You and governors have not yet published details of the impact of last year's spending of the pupil premium funding. As a result, parents are not able to see how far this spending helped to accelerate the progress of disadvantaged pupils across the school. Because you have not yet fully completed the action plan, you are mindful that you have also not written a clear strategy for this year's spending of the pupil premium, as is required. Parents cannot therefore currently check whether staff have identified the barriers to learning that disadvantaged pupils face, nor whether they have set out a clear rationale for how they intend to meet the needs of disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged.

You are tightening up the school's system of managing the performance of teachers to make it more robust. Targets include those that are specifically linked to pupil outcomes, as well as those linked to the school development plan, and are contained within a new folder system for each teacher. These folders bring together detailed information about the progress of each pupil in their class, along with a provision map of support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and for disadvantaged pupils. These maps show clearly which children are receiving the different packages of support. This provision is to be reviewed each half term with subject leaders so that you and the governors can be reassured that the support is having the impact you intend. Where it is not, you are clear that it will be adjusted appropriately, or replaced if necessary. Staff have attended useful training so that the specific targets they set for pupils will be relevant, ambitious and measurable. Governors have also drawn up a programme of further training to ensure that their skills become quickly enhanced in areas such as performance management and in further aspects of safeguarding.

Classrooms I visited with you were purposeful working environments where pupils were busily engaged in the learning that teachers had planned for them. Teachers know clearly both who the most able pupils are, and which are in receipt of the pupil premium. They understand that it is particularly important to give these pupils appropriate work, and to monitor the progress of these pupils alongside other groups. Pupils I met during my visit told me that teachers are now giving them more challenging work as soon as they are ready for it. For example, some pupils in Year 6 have recently been given work which is normally set for typical pupils in Year 8. The pupils were nevertheless capable of completing it and greatly enjoyed tackling the challenge it provided. Pupils' workbooks from different year groups that I looked at during my visit show that, in most cases, teachers are noting misconceptions and ensuring that they give appropriate guidance to pupils to address them. Pupils are, in a large majority of cases, taking notice of them and using them to make improving progress.

You have ensured that you have, alongside staff, reviewed all risk assessments so that they are fit for purpose. You have compiled a record of staff members who have seen these assessments, and when. You intend to pass this record to the governing body so that they can be assured that staff have considered relevant risks to pupils before undertaking different activities, such as when walking with staff around the local community as part of their work. You and governors have also reviewed a number of school policies, beginning, rightly, with child protection, health and safety, critical incidents and fire evacuation. This has ensured that all those concerned with pupils' safeguarding and protection have taken priority. However, a considerable number of policies are due for renewal and there is not a clear timetable for ensuring which governing body committee will undertake each specific review, nor when these will be done.

Ofsted may carry out further monitoring inspections and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

### **External support**

The local authority has supported the school effectively since the previous inspection. Members of the governing body have attended useful training on the governing body's role and responsibilities. The local authority adviser has also visited the school on several occasions to scrutinise work and ensure that, for example, the most able pupils are receiving sufficient challenge, along with supporting teachers in helping pupils to become more confident in their mathematics by, for instance, using new vocabulary.

The local authority has also provided leaders and governors with support and guidance regarding improving the safety of pupils and families at the start of the school day. The adviser and headteacher have already planned further support for the school later this term, including an examination of the impact of additional pupil support and, alongside the governor responsible for the spending of the pupil premium, discussion of the work of disadvantaged pupils. The adviser is fully committed to ensuring that appropriate support from the local authority continues, so that the school becomes good as quickly as possible.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Diocese of Derby, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Derbyshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Roary Pownall  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**