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15 March 2010

Mrs H Good
Acting Headteacher
Knights Templar Church of England/Methodist Community School
Liddymore Road
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Dear Mrs Good

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Knights Templar Church of England/Methodist Community School

Following my visit to your school on 2 March 2010, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the fourth monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures in November 2008. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – good

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – good

Newly Qualified Teachers may not be appointed.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be posted on the Ofsted website.

I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Somerset, the Director of Education of the Diocese of Bath and Wells and the Assistant Education Secretary, Methodist Church Schools.

Yours sincerely

Grahame Sherfield
Her Majesty's Inspector



Special measures: monitoring of Knights Templar Church of England/Methodist Community School

Report from the fourth monitoring inspection on 2 March 2010

Evidence

The inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the acting headteacher and other staff, the Chair of the Governing Body, the recently appointed new headteacher and the local authority school improvement adviser.

Context

The governors have appointed a new headteacher for September 2010, when the acting headteacher returns to her permanent post.

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning

The school's data and inspection evidence indicate that Year 4 pupils are making the necessary progress towards the challenging targets for the summer of 2010. Detailed and frequent discussions of the progress of individual pupils have continued, and talking to pupils and checking their books have contributed to the school's increasingly secure information on how well pupils are doing, particularly in mathematics. The tracking system now provides a more accessible view of pupils' progress over time. Each pupil has an individual target for improving handwriting while targets in English and mathematics remain for groups of pupils and are featured in classroom displays. Pupils know where to find these targets but do not always understand clearly what is meant by them.

The school's assessments indicate that standards in Year 2 are set to improve significantly on those achieved in 2009 and that pupils are on track to reach the targets set for the summer of 2010.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- Improve pupils' standards, particularly in numeracy in Years 3 and 4 – good

Other relevant pupil outcomes

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are enthusiastic and interested in their work. Pupils listen to each other, work together well and show good concentration. On several occasions during the visit, pupils spontaneously applauded those who had read out some of their work to the class.



The effectiveness of provision

Teachers have responded well to the constructive suggestions resulting from the widening range of monitoring activity carried out by the senior leadership team and subject leaders, as well as from the continuing observations by the acting headteacher. The local authority has provided good support for individual teachers as well as other opportunities, for example the recent training for teaching and learning assistants.

The school's monitoring shows that teaching has continued to improve and inspection evidence confirms the improving picture. Good features observed in the classes for Year 3 and Year 4 pupils included well planned sequences of activities, well-targeted questions to check pupils' understanding and skilful handling of pupils' errors. Areas where improvement is needed include maintaining a good pace in learning throughout the lesson and consolidating pupils' understanding in the closing part of the session.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning, particularly in Years 3 and 4 – good

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The acting headteacher continues to lead the school's improvement well. She has worked with senior staff to identify key priorities for the remainder of this year and into next and the recent Creativity Week is a further indication of the school's growing self-confidence. Plans are in place for the acting headteacher to meet the newly appointed headteacher to ensure a smooth transition so that the school's continuing improvement is maintained. This work is set to begin shortly.

The role of the senior leadership team is developing well and senior staff are increasingly involved in the monitoring and evaluation of the school's work. The team's activities have led to action for improvement, for example the current emphasis on pupils' handwriting. Subject leadership is also developing well with recent monitoring carried out, for example in religious education and information and communication technology. The role of the numeracy subject leader has been a particular focus and joint activities with the local authority consultant have resulted in improved knowledge and skills for the future.

The governing body has established a detailed plan for its monitoring activities which is at an early stage in its implementation. The curriculum and monitoring committee has received useful presentations from staff but, as yet, governors' visits to see the school in session are few.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:



- Improve the quality of strategic planning to focus rigorously on rapidly improving pupils' progress – good

External support

The local authority continues to provide good support. This has rightly been adjusted in the light of the school's continuing improvement. The school improvement adviser now visits less frequently, although she remains in close touch with the acting headteacher. The work of local authority consultants and advisers has similarly been tailored well to the school's current position and is increasingly directed to developing the skills needed for the school to sustain its own improvement in the future. The local authority is to plan its support shortly for the forthcoming change in the leadership of the school.