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17 February 2011

Mrs J Hall
Headteacher
Mundford Church of England Primary School
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Dear Mrs Hall

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Mundford Church of England Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 16 February 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please also pass on my thanks to the pupils and governors for their help during the inspection.

There have been a small number of support staff changes since the last inspection and the composition of mixed-age class groups is also a little different. The current headteacher leaves the school at the end of this academic year. The governing body has appointed a new headteacher for September 2011.

As a result of the inspection on 23 November 2009, the school was asked to address the most important areas for improvement which are set out in the annex to this letter.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school has made good progress in making improvements and good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Achievement improved well last year, although boys made better progress than girls, particularly in mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities made good progress. Attainment in Year 2 was above average in reading, writing and mathematics. In Year 6, attainment improved well to broadly average, although relatively low proportions of pupils reached the higher Level 5 in English and mathematics. Learning and progress observed during the inspection were good in almost all lessons. Suitably challenging targets set for the end of Year 6 this year indicate that pupils' higher attainment and improved achievement are likely to continue.

September 2010



A positive focus on developing handwriting skills is helping to improve the presentation of pupils' work. A new handwriting policy has been introduced and pupils are commended in assemblies for the way in which they present their work. A sample of books from Year 6 pupils included examples of a fluent and joined handwriting style. There has also been a significant focus on helping pupils to improve their mental calculation and problem solving skills. Teachers have introduced new resources and a wider range of teaching strategies to develop pupils' mathematical capabilities. Additional tuition has been organised for individual pupils and this has helped to build confidence and raise attainment. Leaders are sensibly continuing the emphasis on this aspect of mathematics throughout this year to help some older pupils fill the gaps in their knowledge and understanding.

The quality of teaching observed in most lessons during the monitoring inspection was good. Teachers routinely discuss with pupils the purpose of the lesson and indicate how they can achieve success in their learning. Interactive whiteboards are used well to illustrate teaching points, and to stimulate and support learning. Where the teaching is strongest, pupils are given many opportunities to share ideas and discuss their views, and teachers carefully choose thought-provoking questions to assess pupils' understanding. Pupils are aware of their targets in reading, writing and mathematics, some of which they write themselves for display in their classrooms. Most marking seen gives pupils an indication of how they might improve their work, but a response from pupils is not always expected. Teachers have had the chance to visit another school to help develop their understanding of outstanding teaching. Leaders recognise that there is still work to do to strengthen teaching further, for example through introducing more guided group work and increasing the level of challenge in some lessons.

Leaders have established a systematic approach to evaluating pupils' progress and the quality of provision. In a well-organised programme, middle leaders and governors undertake a number of monitoring activities throughout the year. A comprehensive approach to collecting and analysing attainment and progress data enables leaders to identify any pupils who may be making less than expected progress. Subject leaders for English and mathematics keep a close check on how much progress pupils make from year to year. They lead staff in evaluating the quality of lesson planning and in moderating the assessment of pupils' work. They also observe lessons in which they check on the overall quality of teaching and learning, and assess the improvements made in key priorities such as mental mathematics. Further priorities for improvement are identified and shared with staff after these monitoring activities. Key governors discuss improvements with subject leaders and report on their focused visits to school. Overall, the strength of collective leadership has boosted the school's capacity to bring about further improvements.

The school has received good support in tackling the key issues. Last year, it joined other schools in the local authority's intensifying support programme, which included guidance from consultants on improving the quality of teaching, learning,

assessment and middle leadership. Senior staff have also had the opportunity to join other local leadership teams to discuss improving provision and achievement. The school's improvement partner visits regularly to provide guidance and review progress.

I hope that you have found the inspection helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Rob McKeown
Additional Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in November 2009

- Develop the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - improving the use of discussion and display to explain what skills and outcomes the teacher is looking for in lessons
 - making sure good quality discussion about pupils' targets deepens their understanding of what they have done well and what they need to improve
 - ensuring all teachers develop a deep understanding of what constitutes outstanding teaching and learning.

- Develop pupils' attainment and achievement by:
 - ensuring handwriting skills are developed more systematically
 - improving pupils' problem solving skills through regular use of mental mathematics activities.

- Enhance middle leaders' roles by enabling them to:
 - monitor in detail the progress made by different groups of pupils including those who find learning more easy
 - evaluate the quality of teaching and learning more rigorously.