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10 December 2010

Mrs Catherine Taylor  
The Advisory Headteacher  
Adisham Church of England Primary School  
The Street  
Adisham  
Canterbury  
Kent  
CT3 3JW

Dear Mrs Taylor

**Special measures: monitoring inspection of Adisham Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 30 November and 1 December 2010, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in January 2010. The full list of the areas for improvement which were identified during that inspection is set out in the annex to this letter. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – satisfactory.

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – good.

Newly qualified teachers may 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 Kent and the Director of Education for the Diocese of Canterbury.

Yours sincerely

Chris Kessell  
Additional Inspector

## Annex

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in January 2010**

- Raise pupils' attainment and improve pupils' progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 by:
  - increasing the proportions of pupils reaching and exceeding the expected levels in reading, writing, mathematics and science
  - improving spelling and punctuation weaknesses and pupils' ability to use interesting vocabulary
  - accelerating the progress of pupils with special educational needs by ensuring that work always builds on their earlier attainment in the basic skills.
  
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
  - increasing the proportion of teaching that is good or better and, as a matter of urgency, eliminating any inadequate teaching
  - ensuring that work is carefully matched to all pupils' capabilities and that staff make consistent use of strategies to manage their behaviour
  - providing individual education plans which show precise steps in literacy and numeracy for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
  
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels by:
  - ensuring that leaders and managers at all levels use self-evaluation more rigorously to monitor the progress made by all groups of pupils and eliminate weaknesses in teaching
  - setting challenging targets for improvement and holding staff to account for pupils' progress
  - improving school improvement planning and evaluation by setting precise attainment targets and monitoring and evaluation criteria
  - developing middle leaders monitoring roles so they can have a greater impact on improving teaching.

## **Special measures: monitoring of Adisham Church of England Primary School**

### **Report from the second monitoring inspection on 30 November and 1 December 2010**

#### **Evidence**

The inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, middle managers, members of the governing body and representatives from the local authority.

#### **Context**

Since the previous monitoring inspection, the school has moved from five to four mixed-age classes. Three members of the teaching staff have left the school. Two new teachers are now working in the Year 5/6 and Year 1/2 classes. The Year 1/2 class has had a change of teacher during this academic year. The school is still being managed by an advisory headteacher. A substantive headteacher has not yet been appointed.

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

School data and pupils' work indicate that the large majority of pupils are now making good progress in relation to their starting points at the beginning of the current academic year. The group showing the least progress is the Year 1/2 class that has been unsettled by a change of teacher. However, recent work shows an improvement on the start of the term. Despite this positive picture, attainment in Year 6 is below average. This is because a significant number of pupils in this year group have special educational needs and/or disabilities and their starting points at the beginning of this academic year were below the levels expected for their age as a result of previous underachievement. They are currently making rapid progress, but it is too early to tell whether they will achieve average attainment by the end of the year. Progress in all lessons observed during the inspection was positive

There is still some slight variation in the progress of different pupil groups. Girls are still making better progress than boys and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities do not always make the same progress as their classmates. Much of this is historical and the school is much better placed to address slower progress because assessment information is now being used more effectively to monitor individual pupil progress. Consequently, staff can now support those who are not doing as well as they should be. The management and organisation of provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities has improved significantly. Individual education plans now contain sharper targets for English and mathematics. Better attention is being paid to the progress that pupils are making against their

targets and there is a greater focus in teachers' planning on ensuring that all pupils are given work that is appropriate to their levels of understanding.

Pupils recognise that they are making better progress, especially in their writing which has been a weakness in the past. They enjoy the opportunities they have in English to write extensively about a range of subjects and using more interesting vocabulary. Much of the pupils' written work on display is of good quality and well presented. Pupils' attitudes to work are extremely positive and this is contributing well to better learning and progress. The school has focused on improving pupils' progress and attainment in English and mathematics. Although analysis of pupils' science books indicates that many pupils are making good progress in this subject, the school is unable to show this through assessment data.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on the area for improvement:

- raise pupils' attainment and improve pupils' progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 – good.

### **Other relevant pupil outcomes**

Attendance has continued to improve and is well above the national average. Behaviour remains good and pupils commented that they felt it had continued to improve. In lessons pupils talk confidently about their work and enjoy their activities. They are keen to answer questions and are respectful of each others' views and ideas.

### **The effectiveness of provision**

Pupils are now making better progress because the quality of teaching has improved significantly since the previous visit. About 75% of teaching is good. Inadequate teaching has been eradicated. These improvements reflect the high expectations of the advisory headteacher and the preparedness of the current teaching staff to reflect upon, and improve, their practice. Teachers have raised their expectations of what all pupils can achieve and their behaviour. Good attention is now paid to the quality of support provided to pupils for their reading and the development of spelling and handwriting. Pupils are writing much more than they used to, although the focus tends to be through English rather than developing writing skills in other subjects.

Pupils' progress is now being checked regularly and this assessment information is used to ensure that lesson activities are consistently planned to match pupils' abilities so pupils settle quickly to their tasks with good levels of concentration. For example, Years 3 and 4 pupils made good progress in a mathematics lesson focusing on time because of the close attention paid to individual needs. This included pupils who had missed their learning on the previous day because of the severe weather.

Teaching assistants are contributing well to pupils' learning through the good support that they provide.

Pupils are now provided with group targets in English and mathematics. In addition, pupils are given specific guidance related to the National Curriculum level they are working towards. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 stated categorically that targets were helping them make better progress and helping with their learning. Although target setting is clearly contributing to improved progress, younger pupils in Years 1 and 2 are less familiar with their targets because the process is not yet fully established. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and offer supportive comments along with comments that indicate to pupils how they can improve. Most pupils are offered time to respond to comments. Marking is better in English than in mathematics.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on the area for improvement:

- improve the quality of teaching and learning – good.

### **The effectiveness of leadership and management**

The advisory headteacher continues to have a significant impact on school improvement. She has a clear understanding of developing strengths and areas for improvement. This expertise is now being passed on to middle managers who are developing their roles well through clearly defined programmes of monitoring. They are now much better positioned to improve pupils' progress and the quality of provision. They have successfully analysed pupils' work and teachers' planning. Although monitoring has not yet included observations of teaching, these are planned for the immediate future to continue their development. These monitoring activities and a relevant programme of professional development have helped to improve the contribution that middle managers make to school leadership. Teachers are held to account for their pupils' progress as they work towards challenging targets. School self-evaluation is in line with external monitoring. The school staff work well as a team and share the advisory headteacher's vision and ambition for the school. This has secured a high proportion of good teaching that ensures good progress by pupils.

Governors now undertake monitoring and evaluation and are ready to challenge staff about attainment, progress and provision. They have, for example, undertaken their own analysis of pupil progress and attainment using the data available to the school. Minutes of meetings now prioritise issues related to school improvement. Middle managers and governors are developing their capacity for sustained improvement effectively. However, despite the school making good progress since the last monitoring inspection, there is still an over reliance on external support through the advisory headteacher.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on the area for improvement:

- improve the quality of leadership and management at all levels – good.

## **External support**

The school has benefited from effective external support since the previous inspection, especially the partnership that has been established with the teaching and learning adviser. The school is now much better placed to achieve its challenging, but realistic, targets identified for pupil progress and the percentage of good teaching for 2011.

## **Priorities for further improvement**

- Develop effective systems to monitor pupils' progress and attainment in science.
- Ensure that the school becomes less-reliant on external support by establishing a substantive senior management structure to improve the capacity for sustained improvement.