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4 February 2011

Mrs F Brinicombe
Headteacher
St David's Church of England Primary School
Dinham Road
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Devon
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Dear Mrs Brinicombe

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of St David's Church of England Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 2 February 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection.

Since the previous inspection there has been a significant turnover of teaching staff and significant disruption to some classes because of teacher absence. A newly qualified teacher joined the school in September 2010 and another teacher started at the school at the beginning of February 2011.

As a result of the inspection on 4–5 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 satisfactory progress in making improvements and good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Pupils' attainment in mathematics is rising. The most recent end-of-Year 6 test results in 2010 show a marked improvement from the previous year. The school's current assessment information indicates that a significant majority of pupils in most year groups reach the levels expected for their age. Rates of progress are also increasing, particularly in Year 2. The proportion of pupils who have made at least satisfactory progress towards achieving their curriculum targets in mathematics has increased in each year group.

The quality of teaching and learning ranges from good to satisfactory and is satisfactory overall. There are aspects of good teaching and learning in all classrooms, for example, when pupils use and apply their knowledge and skills to



solve challenging problems and when they work at a brisk pace. Teachers' subject knowledge in mathematics is secure and pupils' tasks are more closely matched to their different ability levels than at the time of the last inspection. Teachers ensure that pupils have time to use and apply their skills and knowledge and practise their learning. Nevertheless, the school is still some way from meeting the target to ensure that at least 75% of teaching is judged good or better. This is because some important weaknesses remain, for example, when the pace of learning slows during whole-class sessions and when teachers fail to ensure that all pupils listen sufficiently to important instructions and explanations. While most of the pupils' written work is marked regularly, teachers' comments do not always provide sufficient help to show pupils what they need to do next to improve their work.

As headteacher, you have been exceptionally robust and diligent in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, particularly in some year groups. All teachers have received written feedback about their work, and in some cases this has been extremely well targeted to focus on how the quality of teaching might be improved. However, the feedback to all teachers is not yet sufficiently rigorous in bringing about sustained improvement. For example, points for development have not always been followed up quickly enough and timescales for improvement are sometimes too broad.

There are rigorous and robust systems for tracking pupils' attainment, achievement and rates of progress, which show a clear strengthening of the school's capacity to improve at a faster rate than previously. All teachers are held to account for the standards of attainment reached by the pupils in their care. You demonstrate drive and ambition for the school to do even better and have been instrumental in keeping the school moving forward since the last inspection. Procedures for whole-school monitoring and evaluation are strong and you make good use of local authority consultants, who provide a good level of support and intervention. These aspects of leadership are shown particularly in the good quality raising attainment plans and regular monitoring visits to the school by local authority consultants and the school's support adviser. The governing body is not only supportive but also increasingly rigorous in carrying out its statutory duties. The teachers currently in charge of the Reception and Year 1 class make good use of assessment and record keeping systems to track pupils' progress. The mathematics subject leader has a secure understanding of how to raise attainment further in mathematics.

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

Andrew Watters
Her Majesty's Inspector



Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place on 4–5 November 2009.

- Improve teaching so that the proportion judged good or better is at least 75% by the end of the summer term 2010 by ensuring that:
 - senior leaders undertake focused monitoring and feedback
 - teaching is informed by pupil assessment so that it is closely matched to pupils' needs and provides appropriate challenges
 - all lessons provide adequate time for pupils to develop and practise their skills and learning.
- Raise standards in mathematics by:
 - improving the subject knowledge of teachers and raising their expectations
 - developing the focused use of progress tracking systems to identify and target underachievement
 - ensuring that marking clearly informs pupils about what they need to do to make progress.
- Improve the progress made by children in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - helping the new leader to develop effective systems for observation, assessment and record keeping.

