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Mrs J Boaler
Headteacher
Tickhill St Mary's Church of England Primary and Nursery School
St Mary's Road
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Doncaster
South Yorkshire
DN11 9LZ

Dear Mrs Boaler

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Tickhill St Mary's Church of England Primary and Nursery School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 12 January 2011, for the time you gave to our telephone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please give my thanks also to the pupils who met with me.

As a result of the inspection in 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 improved in the year after the last inspection. The unvalidated results for Key Stage 1 in 2010 indicate that pupils' attainment is now significantly above average. This is a notable improvement on 2009. The school's data suggest that pupils' attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 has also improved since 2009 and may have been above average in 2010. This indicates that the previously declining trend at Key Stage 2 has been arrested.

These improvements are the result of better teaching, which is securely satisfactory; it is sometimes good, but not yet consistently

The pupils told the inspector that lessons are engaging and enjoyable, with varied and interesting activities. This reflects what was seen in the inspection, including the use made of the outdoor area in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The pupils responded well in lessons and behaviour was equally as strong as at the last inspection. Their enjoyment of lessons is the result of well-chosen topics and, in the



lessons observed, the pupils were able to recall, for example, instructive activities that linked what they were learning about to the world of work. The teachers sustained a busy and productive atmosphere in lessons, so that, for example, one pupil was moved to remark that 'we never get a break'. Equally, the pupils demonstrated a strong capacity to concentrate on tasks for extended periods of time, although the amount of time that they were given meant that the pace of learning was steady rather than rapid. The teachers ensured that, generally, the work provided was matched to the capabilities of the pupils, using assessment information effectively to help with this, although this was not yet the case consistently for the more-able pupils. In one of the better lessons seen, the teacher used questions well to prompt increasingly in-depth thinking by the pupils. Many pupils responded with cogent, perceptive and fluently expressed answers.

The school has improved its capacity for making improvements securely and sustainably. There is unequivocally a focus on improving the quality of teaching to address the particular areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. The process for doing so is based upon well-considered and rigorous use of good quality data about pupils' progress to examine the effectiveness of teaching. This is supplemented with regular and well-judged monitoring of lessons, teachers' planning and pupils' work. The process is being managed well and now involves a wider range of managers than previously. The headteacher has a good command of the detail of pupils' progress and precise understanding of what this reveals about aspects of teaching that need to be improved. She has ensured that the understanding of the issues and the approach to making improvements are consistent amongst key managers and the staff as a whole. Roles and responsibilities have been reallocated so that the school is now making good use of expertise. The delegation of responsibility to and rapid development of teamwork amongst key managers has motivated the staff and enabled the school to increase the pace of developments, particularly in the last eight months. In addition, the school has increased its expertise by making well-targeted use of professional development for the staff, including external support from the local authority and other schools. The governing body has been involved fully in working directly with leaders and managers to bring about improvements and this has had a notably beneficial effect. As a result of these factors, the quality of teaching and learning has improved and pupils' attainment has increased.

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

Clive Moss
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- Accelerate the progress made by all groups of pupils by ensuring that:
 - the pace of lessons is always brisk enough to sustain the best progress
 - the work provided is accurately matched to every pupil's needs
 - more-able pupils are consistently challenged.
- Ensure that the outdoor environment in the Early Years Foundation Stage is used effectively to help all pupils consolidate and extend their learning across the curriculum.