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Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Conroy

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Shorne Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 8 March 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please pass on my thanks to staff, the colleague representing the governing body, the pupils I met and the administrative staff who helped the day run smoothly.

Since the last inspection, there have been a small number of changes in staffing and there are currently two newly qualified members of staff.

As a result of the inspection on 7 December 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.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children enjoy activities, know their routines well and most are articulate in telling visitors what they are doing. The teaching of letter sounds and combinations, which is set at the appropriate levels, enables children to develop their early reading and writing skills effectively. Simple computer-based activities allow them to use modern technology to collect and present information such the eye colours of their classmates. The classroom layout has been reorganised to good effect and while the outside area has also undergone similar changes in organisation, resources are relatively old and there is still a lack of resources to enliven children's more imaginative learning or challenge their physical abilities further.



Results in the in 2010 national tests for Year 6 pupils were mixed. In English, results improved significantly on previous levels, particularly those pupils reaching the higher levels. In mathematics, results unexpectedly dropped and in response, the school has focused more efforts on supporting those pupils identified as falling behind or who have gaps in their knowledge. Teacher assessments and current work indicate that attainment across Years 3 to 6 is in line to reverse the trend in mathematics and maintain the above-average results in English. Pupils in Year 2 met their targets in reading, writing and mathematics, although those reaching the higher levels fell short of those achieved by other pupils nationally. The school's regular and more rigorous pupil progress meetings identify more quickly those who need extra help in their learning. Current assessments and pupils' current learning in Year 2 indicate that the increased focus on pupils' learning is paying dividends.

Teachers are responsive to modifying their approaches quickly to ensure pupils' progress is maintained. There is now a consistent approach in most lessons in terms of what pupils are expected to learn, how they can assess their own learning and in setting similar expectations of pupils' behaviour and learning approaches. The use of pupils' writing skills within different subjects is developing systematically, with some year groups piloting themed project work which has explicit opportunities for pupils to write for a range of purposes. Pupils' current work in books across year groups indicates these skills are used well in science and history.

The school leadership team has worked with a clear purpose to tackle the key priorities for improvement. This approach has effectively developed a more collective responsibility and vision across the whole school for pupils' outcomes. There are detailed and precise plans to remedy areas such as the use of writing across the curriculum, improving aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage and in holding teaching to account for the progress of pupils. Priorities for improving the consistency and quality of teaching and learning across the school are working effectively. For example, pupils enjoy the regular opportunities to assess classmates' learning using their new 'tickled pink' and 'green for growth' approaches. Although these initiatives are relatively new, they are proving popular and effective in motivating pupils to reflect on their own and others' learning. Regular pupil progress meetings have raised teachers' expectations of pupils' capacity to achieve in lessons and make better use of assessment information now available. The developing use of day-to-day assessment strategies in lessons is more closely matching activities to pupils' ability levels and accelerating rates of progress.

The governing body, working more closely with subject leaders, now play a greater role in monitoring the work of the school. Through consultation, a new curriculum team structure has been established bringing governors' and staff expertise together to good effect. As a result, the governing body have clear roles in monitoring the work of the school and are often aligned to the current focus of action by the staff. Governors ensure that safeguarding and vetting arrangements meet current requirements. Good training has meant that governors, along with staff, are better



equipped to challenge the progress pupils make and to develop the capacity to improve. The local authority has provided a range of effective support in aiding the school's focus on improving teaching and monitoring routines.

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

Kevin Hodge
Additional Inspector

Annex

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

- Improve provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - ensuring children have clear routines to follow
 - improving the layout of the classroom and outdoor area so that resources are more inviting and all activities are purposeful
 - pitching work at the right level for children's differing abilities.
- Ensure teaching is more consistent across the school by:
 - matching work more closely to pupils' differing needs
 - improving the guidance provided through target setting and marking
 - increasing the pupils' involvement in assessing their own learning
 - monitoring pupils' day-to-day progress more rigorously.
- Extend opportunities for pupils to practise their independent writing across the curriculum.