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5 May 2011

Mrs J Sands  
Guyhirn CofE VC Primary School  
High Road  
Guyhirn  
Wisbech  
PE13 4ED

Dear Mrs Sands

**Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Guyhirn CofE VC Primary School**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 4 May 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection.

Two of the three classes have different teachers since the last inspection. More pupils than average move into or out of this small school during the year.

As a result of the inspection on 4 and 5 February 2010, 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 satisfactory progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Pupils enter the school with knowledge, understanding and skills which are generally well below those found nationally. In 2010, the attainment of Year 6 pupils was well below average, especially in mathematics. Pupils made less than expected progress except for higher attainers and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, attainment at the end of Year 2 improved to be broadly average overall and pupils made mostly good progress. The school's assessment information for current Year 6 pupils indicates that they are on track to meet the targets set for them and improve considerably on 2010 results, especially in mathematics. Most pupils, across all years, are making at least expected progress. This improvement is the result of effective staff training, a strong focus on teaching and successful implementation of a new policy on calculation. Nevertheless, some



pupils still find the application of mathematical skills difficult, for example when translating a problem in words into a numerical calculation.

In lessons, pupils behave very well and settle to work promptly. They show enthusiasm for practical tasks such as when they were observed testing which materials float or sink in a science lesson, or in measuring the perimeters of the playground in mathematics. They work together well in pairs and small groups. In the lessons observed, pupils made mostly good progress.

The quality of teaching is improving, especially in mathematics. Teachers now use subject knowledge accurately and emphasise key vocabulary. They plan carefully for pupils of different ages and capability, including using teaching assistants effectively to lead small groups through tasks. They help pupils to visualise problems and show how different methods might be used to resolve them.

Staff have introduced a clear marking and feedback policy which ensures greater consistency of approach across the school. Pupils and teachers now use a common system to highlight where objectives have been achieved and identify areas for improvement. Pupils have a very clear understanding of this system. Older pupils assess each other's work confidently and make relevant suggestions for improvement. In the best marking, teachers provide clear targets for improving work and encourage pupils to develop or modify particular aspects.

The headteacher and staff have established a clear vision for improving the school and work together well as a team. The school development plan is now focused on a limited set of priorities. The most important elements are included in a termly operational plan which ensures a very clear emphasis on key actions. Leaders monitor and evaluate activities thoroughly, assessing progress and refining plans. However, there are not always specific targets or success criteria in the various priorities to help measure improvements. The governing body is developing the capacity to review the school's work and evaluate its performance using a small group of governors to monitor each major school priority.

The local authority provides effective support through regular review by the school improvement partner and well-focused training for staff. The partnership with a local school has been very effective, allowing staff to see successful practice in mathematics, work with a leading teacher and plan new approaches to learning.

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

**Martin Cragg**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

September 2010

## Annex

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

- Raise attainment in mathematics and science by:
  - improving teaching of problem solving and investigations
  - ensuring that marking identifies clearly how pupils can improve their work
  - providing opportunities for pupils to make corrections and improvements.
- Refine the school development plan to provide a sharper focus on fewer key priorities.