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Miss Hanks
Stickney Church of England Primary School
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Dear Miss Hanks

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Stickney Church of England 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. Please pass on my thanks to the Chair of the Governing Body, and to the local authority's School Improvement Partner, who made themselves available at short notice. I would also like to thank the pupils, teachers and other adults observed during lessons and the pupils and teachers who met with me for interviews.

Staffing has been stable since the last inspection, as only one class teacher joined the school to replace a teacher who left. The central record of suitability checks on staff was scrutinised during the inspection and it meets the current government requirements.

As a result of the inspection on 21 September 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.

Attainment is rising and pupils' achievement has improved well since the school's last inspection. The latest published data indicate that by the end of Year 6, pupils attain standards in reading, writing and mathematics well above national age-related expectations. The attainment of the large majority of pupils in other year groups is at least in line with national age-related expectations and pupils are making good, and in some cases accelerated, progress. However, there are some inconsistencies in the rate of pupils' progress across the school.

September 2010



Pupils' achievement is improving because the quality of teaching is improving rapidly. All teaching observed during the inspection was good and pupils made good progress in their learning. Teachers plan lessons well and explain the learning objectives and success criteria to pupils in each lesson. In some lessons, pupils do not focus upon their learning as well as they could and instead concentrate solely upon completing tasks. Where progress is strongest, teachers ensure that pupils are fully focused in their learning and understand success criteria, are clear about their current level of performance and understand the next steps they need to take in order to improve.

The school's systems to track the progress of individuals and different groups of pupils over time, for example, the more able, are now fully embedded and are used effectively by staff. Interim checks on pupils' progress are rigorous and pupils' performance against appropriately defined targets are well monitored. Attention is given to the progress of pupils across the full range of ability. Any underperformance is swiftly identified and appropriate strategies are implemented to address issues. For example, school staff operate an extended system of one-to-one tuition sessions in reading, writing and mathematics across the school, for pupils making slower rates of progress. These sessions run just before and just after the normal school day. School data clearly demonstrates the positive impact these sessions have had upon pupils' improved progress. Teachers make better use of assessment information to plan challenging and appropriate lessons for pupils of differing abilities. On some occasions, pupils move classrooms to work in lessons with older pupils, in order to provide them with a higher level of challenge. Highly skilled teaching support staff are well guided by teachers and are making a significant contribution to the improved rate of pupils' progress.

The school's introduction of a revised curriculum from September 2010 has further supported the improved breadth of opportunities for pupils to consolidate their skills and understanding. For example, pupils now have more frequent opportunities to develop their writing skills across different subjects. Teachers are also in the early stages of implementing a programme to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of letters and sounds across the school.

Improvements in the school's provision have been underpinned by the strengthened role of the senior leadership team. Through their shared leading of staff meetings, visits to other schools to observe good and outstanding practice and increased opportunities to observe and feed back to other teachers, they have been able to provide good guidance towards the development and improvement of teaching and learning across the school. The senior leadership team has also strengthened its links with the school's governing body, for example, by producing and sharing well-written progress reports with them. Staff morale is high and the headteacher was described by one member of staff as being 'a great enabler.' There is a noticeable determination amongst staff to continue to improve.

The local authority's advisory team and School Improvement Partner have provided the school with good support, particularly in setting up structured partnership working with other schools in the local area. This, together with well coordinated staff training and the increased responsibilities and influence of the senior leadership team, has helped to increase the school's capacity for sustained improvement.

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

Jeremy Spencer
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- Increase the proportion of good teaching to meet the school's target of over 80%, ensuring that:
 - teaching strategies are varied and appropriate to pupils' needs
 - assessment information is used effectively to plan challenging learning for all pupils.

- Raise attainment through Years 1 to 6, to at least national expectations for the large majority of pupils by the end of the academic year, ensuring that:
 - attention is given to the progress of pupils across the full range of ability, especially the more able pupils
 - interim checks are rigorous and provide information on how individual pupils are meeting their targets.

- Develop further the role of the senior leadership team in promoting and reviewing the pupils' achievement in all year groups, ensuring that:
 - they provide guidance on teaching and learning
 - pupils across the ability range have a sufficiently wide range of challenging opportunities to consolidate their skills and understanding.