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28 September 2011

Ms Barnes  
The Headteacher  
St Mary's Church of England (Aided) Primary School, Chipping Norton  
The Green  
Chipping Norton  
Oxfordshire  
OX7 5DH

Dear Ms Barnes

**Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of St Mary's Church of England (Aided) Primary School, Chipping Norton**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 27 September 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please thank the staff and pupils who came and discussed the school's work.

As a result of the inspection on 14 and 15 July 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 good progress in making improvements and good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Overall, pupils are now making more consistent progress as they move up through the school. In 2010, the attainment of Year 6 pupils was higher than the national average but the school's unvalidated results for 2011 show that while better standards in English were maintained, results in mathematics fell slightly. An analysis to see what changes are needed in mathematics teaching is already underway.

Pupils' progress, including of those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is systematically and regularly monitored. Pupils have clear targets and those spoken to know what they are trying to achieve both in their lesson and over the longer term. A substantial number of interventions and strategies support those who find work more difficult. These are improving reading and writing skills but alternative resources are lacking for mathematics to stimulate interest amongst the pupils with special needs whose mathematical progress is slow or stalled.



Targets are clearly displayed in classrooms and pupils make good use of the 'toolkits' which teachers imaginatively adapt to show pupils the steps to take to achieve their expected learning. Teaching includes appropriate opportunities for the pupils to assess their own work and/or those of their classmates; for example, Year 2 pupils reviewed each other's draft work to see if any capital letters or full stops had been missed out. Pupils are guided to offer positive and constructive comments and to communicate effectively. Year 6 pupils discussed, in pairs, a brief video clip to help them recall and understand the five pillars of Islam; this helped them consolidate their learning well.

Pupils' books show that the school's revised marking policy is consistently applied and guides pupils appropriately. This has been helpful in improving progress and standards in writing. Teachers learn from each other and have worked well together to accurately judge the quality of pupils' written work.

The high quality lesson plans highlight clearly how pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are to be challenged and supported in each lesson. These challenges are now closely linked to pupils' individualised learning plans. Teaching assistants record pupils' progress and systematically report back via a daily learning record. This system has helped the inclusion manager to evaluate the impact of the various interventions and support programmes; it is still being refined. The school has had good support from the local authority to develop this area of its work. Pupils with a disability are included well.

The overall monitoring of all pupils' progress is of a very high standard because the headteacher rigorously interrogates and understands the pupils' progress data. The whole leadership team is involved in holding teachers and teaching assistants to account for the progress of their pupils through regular performance management meetings. Areas for development are identified and acted upon swiftly. The leadership team has a clear vision for improvement. The school's development plan is to the point and arises out of effective school evaluation. All stakeholders, including the governors and the whole teaching staff, have been involved. This good unified approach, together with recent successes in improving pupils' rates of progress, especially at the end of Key Stage 1, gives the school a good capacity to continue improving. Pupils' behaviour and their attendance continue to be good.

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

Mo Roberts

**Her Majesty's Inspector**



## Annex

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

- Raise attainment, especially in Key Stage 1, by improving the consistency of the teachers' use of assessment to aid learning through:
  - the setting of individualised targets for pupils in each class
  - increasing the opportunities for pupils to assess their own work and that of their peers
  - improving the quality of marking and feedback to pupils by sharing best practice across the school.
- Improve the learning and progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities by:
  - ensuring that learning objectives are precise and that progress is measured frequently and recorded
  - improving the monitoring of the effectiveness of individualised learning plans used in lessons.