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3 November 2011

Miss J Keeble  
The Headteacher  
Yatton Church of England Junior School  
High Street  
Yatton  
Bristol  
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Dear Miss Keeble

**Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Yatton Church of England Junior School**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 2 November 2011, for the time you gave to our telephone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please pass on my thanks to staff, pupils and governors for their help. I would like to thank the School Improvement Lead Professional for coming into school to meet me.

Since the inspection the school has federated with Yatton Voluntary Controlled Church of England Infant School. The headteacher of the infant school is now executive headteacher of the federated schools. There is a federated governing body in place.

As a result of the inspection on 19 and 20 May 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.

Pupils' attainment in writing has improved. The most recent school test results for 2011 show that the gap between school performance and national expectations at the end of Year 6 has narrowed significantly. Achievement in writing is now above national expectations. Pupils' starting points in writing on entry to Year 3 are varied. Some pupils attain highly at Key Stage 1. Therefore, by the time pupils reach the end of Key Stage 2 progress overall is broadly in line with national expectations.



The confidence with which pupils discuss their ideas for writing has been a key change, leading to improved standards of writing. In an English lesson observed pupils practised questions with each other, relating to what it feels like to be homeless. As a result they showed a high degree of empathy for the subject and wrote sensitive questions. Pupils use punctuation accurately and their spelling of more adventurous words showed a good application of knowledge in this skill. Consequently, work produced was of a high standard.

The curriculum supports pupils' progress well in writing. Pupils experience different writing genre. They enthusiastically discuss events in Shakespeare's Macbeth in preparation for their own writing. Pupils can use imagery well to enliven their writing. One pupil wrote as a story opener, 'Time went by like a snail crawling across a path.' Work in books shows some good use of punctuation well used in longer pieces of writing. Targets for improving writing are set and most pupils know how to improve their work.

In mathematics lessons, observations and scrutiny of teachers' planning show increased challenge for more able pupils. In the most effective lessons teachers make their expectations explicit. Pupils work at a good pace and apply their mathematical skills well. In a mathematics lesson focusing on solving word problems higher ability pupils worked well together using their knowledge of the four rules to work out answers to the questions. They were able to check their answers and explain the methods used. In planning mathematics lessons teachers detail how they expect higher achieving pupils to move forward in their learning. However, occasionally this is not the case in all planning, because some plans list activities to be covered as opposed to expectations of learning.

Higher achieving pupils report they enjoy mathematics and teachers make learning interesting. They particularly like the lessons which are interactive, such as those involving quizzes and games. Teachers use practical resources well to support pupils' understanding. Work in books for higher achieving pupils is well presented and of a good standard. Teachers' marking praises pupils' efforts and gives effective advice on next steps. School data and tracking show that an increased number of pupils are now on track to achieve higher levels in mathematics. The school is confident that pupil progress meetings identify any higher achieving pupil not making expected progress so that the appropriate intervention is quickly put in place. Higher achieving pupils are confident in their ability in mathematics and generally know how well they are getting on. The school acknowledges that some higher achieving pupils are less sure how to improve their work in order to progress to the next level.

The leadership of mathematics has supported teachers' confidence in raising the challenge in lessons. Training from the local authority in the teaching of mathematics has further developed staff subject knowledge so there is more consistency across the school. There is now a uniform approach to teaching different calculation methods and this is helping pupils to raise standards further.



The curriculum offers pupils a good range of experiences which develop their understanding of different cultures. Since the last inspection the school has implemented plans to establish international links. A link with Ethiopia gives pupils an insight into life in another country. World stories link in with topics so that pupils compare their experiences with different cultures. Opportunities through special events such as Arts Week and Black History Month further develop pupils' understanding. Visitors to school bring music from other cultures which broaden pupils' curriculum experiences. Added to this, pupils take part in regional musical events where they meet pupils from different school settings. Pupils debate with others from the locality in the Schools' Democracy Day and so learn about the views of others. In this way pupils are gaining an understanding of what it is like to belong to different world cultures.

The drive and ambition of the new leadership team in improving pupils' attainment has been particularly successful in raising the attainment of pupils in writing. The executive headteacher along with the deputy headteacher has supported and challenged the staff through planned observations and a series of meetings which track pupils' progress. Consequently, teachers are now more sharply accountable for the progress of pupils' in their classes. The newly established federated governing body is informed through the headteacher's reports and has a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development of the school. The School Improvement Lead Professional has supported the school well in its drive to raise standards further. The school is in the early stages of sharing expertise with its partner school, such as discussions relating to the teaching of mathematics. This is adding to the school's good progress in demonstrating a better 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

Jane Neech

**Her Majesty's Inspector**



## **Annex**

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

- Improve pupils' spelling and punctuation skills in order to raise attainment in writing still further.
- Ensure that tasks for higher attaining pupils in mathematics consistently provide them with the challenge they need to move forward.
- Fully implement the plans to link with a school in a contrasting area so that pupils can gain first-hand experience of meeting with and learning from pupils from different cultures.