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30 November 2011

Miss K Marshall
Headteacher
Carisbrooke Church of England Controlled Primary School
Wellington Road
Carisbrooke
Newport
Isle of Wight
PO30 5QT

Dear Miss Marshall

**Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of
Carisbrooke Church of England Controlled Primary School**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 29 November 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please also pass on my thanks to the staff, pupils and members of the governing body who gave of their time to meet with me.

As of September 2011, the school became a primary school for pupils aged 4 to 11. This was a result of the Isle of Wight local authority's school reorganisation. There have been significant changes and additions to staffing at all levels since the school was last inspected to reflect the substantial increase in the number of pupils who now attend. Three additional governors have been appointed. The school was without a substantive deputy for two terms last year. The new deputy headteacher as well as the newly appointed inclusion leader took up their posts in September 2011.

As a result of the inspection on 13 and 14 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 satisfactory progress in making improvements, and good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Pupils are making better progress from their starting points. Following a dip in levels of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics in 2010, levels rose again in 2011, with a high proportion of pupils gaining the higher Level 3 in writing. As the school adapts to being a primary school, with provision up to Year 6 for the first time this year, pupils' current achievement in reading and writing, and increasingly in mathematics, is strongest at Key stage 1. There are pockets of good practice throughout the school and senior leaders have correctly identified the need for this to become more consistently good or better, particularly in Key Stage 2. Those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals do not always perform as well as their peers. Furthermore, boys make less progress in writing than girls. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make at least expected progress; their progress is being accelerated this year as a result of good and well-targeted additional support. However, class teachers do not all take sufficient responsibility for providing well-structured activities to enable this group of pupils to work independently and equally as successfully in class-based lessons.

Pupils learn to build upon their basic knowledge of English and grammar, learnt in the infants, to produce more complex written work in the juniors. Good examples observed included using connectives in Year 4 and writing persuasively in Year 6. Pupils told the inspector that they appreciate having more open-ended investigative mathematical activities. They enjoyed, for example, measuring the perimeter of different items around the classroom. Younger children in Reception enjoyed identifying and describing different 3-D shapes while blindfolded.

Typically teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge. They make frequent reference to targets and success criteria during lessons. This helps pupils to understand how they can improve their work. The quality of marking, although much improved, is still not consistently good throughout the school. The better use of assessment strategies in lessons is enabling teachers to check pupils' understanding, for example, of key vocabulary. However, teachers do not always use these strategies during lessons to identify when pupils require additional support or further challenge. There are missed opportunities to use technology to support and enhance teaching and learning, especially in writing and mathematics. Pupils now take more pride in their work. This is reflected in the improving quality of presentation in their books, particularly in their best books. Pupils have appreciated guidance from staff about how to lay out and present their work well.

Most teachers plan their lessons effectively and include clear guidance for additional adults about how to support the needs of pupils. Where the quality of daily planning is less than good, it does not provide sufficient detail about how the knowledge and skills of pupils of differing abilities will be progressed.

The shared learning environment for Reception children is providing more opportunities for children to extend their learning in independent activities. A good example was observed with children pretending to be policemen and women searching for numbers in the outside learning area. The revision of the curriculum is taking greater account of pupils' interests. This has already resulted in better use of

the outdoor learning environment and more opportunities for pupils to undertake practical work. In Years 1 to 6, there are increasing links between literacy and other subjects and topics, but such links are less well developed for mathematics. Consequently, mathematics activities are not always taught in a meaningful context. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about the religious education focus days and what they are learning about other faiths, such as the prayer rituals of Muslims. However, what they know of other cultures and faiths is still at a basic level. Furthermore, their knowledge and understanding of multicultural Great Britain remains a weakness.

Pupils' behaviour in lessons is good. Most pupils now listen to each other and are respectful and courteous, so others can concentrate well on their work. However, behaviour in the playground at lunchtimes is overly boisterous. This is particularly the case when football dominates most of the playground area. Some pupils would welcome having a quiet, sheltered area in which to play.

The capacity of leaders and managers to improve the school has increased since the last inspection. However, some leaders and managers are still relatively new in post. This, together with the school going up to Year 6 for the first time, has resulted in some initiatives, such as accelerating the progress pupils make in mathematics, not yet being fully embedded. The headteacher provides strong and determined leadership and is very well supported by the new deputy headteacher, the inclusion leader and the governing body. The work of the deputy with parents, carers, staff and pupils has led to a significant rise in levels of attendance this term. Senior leaders are improving the monitoring of teaching and learning and hold staff to account for the progress being made by pupils. Key action improvement plans, while clear, do not always focus sharply enough on different groups of pupils. Furthermore, they do not include interim milestones against which progress can be measured. The good support provided by external partners, including the local authority, has helped middle leaders to develop their capacity to improve. Those with areas of responsibility are now leading and not just managing their areas. The governing body and senior leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas in need of improvement. They work well together as a team and are increasingly making effective use of good quality data to target underachievement.

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

Gehane Gordelier
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- Improve the quality of learning through:
 - ensuring activities support pupils' achievements and providing more open-ended tasks, especially in mathematics
 - raising the expectations of presentation of work
 - capitalizing more on pupils' interests in curriculum planning
 - providing more opportunities for Reception children to extend their learning in independent activities
 - expecting all pupils to listen to others and get on with their work quietly.
- Increase the effectiveness of assessment and procedures to set targets and:
 - enhance their use throughout all lessons and in all subjects
 - help pupils recognize that their achievements need not be limited to the targets set for them, and when marking work, indicate how it could improve.
- Raise pupils' awareness of the different social, religious and cultural groups in the wider community.