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Mrs S Lear
The Headteacher
Langley Fitzurse Church of England School
Middle Common
Chippenham
Wiltshire
SN15 5NN

Dear Mrs Lear

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Langley Fitzurse Church of England School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 24 January 2012 and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please pass my thanks to the governors, parents and pupils who came to speak to me.

Since the last inspection the school now has its entire permanent staff back in post. It has added an after-school club and a garden for quiet reflection. As a result of the inspection on 1 and 2 December 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.

Achievement of pupils at the school

The school has had a relentless focus on raising standards and, as a result, pupils of all abilities are achieving more successfully. The school appears to be on course to meet the floor target set by the government for the combined English and mathematics scores, although English at Key Stage 2 remains stronger than mathematics. Overall, mathematics results of Year 6 in 2011 showed improvement but remained slightly below the national average. Higher attaining pupils did well because they are given appropriate challenges. There are now also more targeted interventions to further support those who find the subject more difficult. Consequently, pupils' mathematical skills are improving due to their increased confidence and positive attitudes to the subject. The introduction of a new mathematics scheme, together with various innovative programmes to raise the profile of the subject with both pupils and parents, is paying dividends. Pupils regularly practise their mental mathematics and enjoy their related home learning

books. These contain a wide variety of questions and challenges. They have also benefited from the competitive computer programme that encourages them to hone their speed and accuracy. In lessons, pupils generally respond well to questions and are mostly keen to follow through on their tasks so their skills become well developed.

The quality of teaching

Teaching is much improved and mathematics lessons are based on thorough planning and effective use of pupil assessment. Teachers are careful to adjust the work for the different experience and abilities of their pupils in the mixed age classes. While the majority of each lesson is successful, a few pupils in Years 2 to 4 lack stamina in tackling their independent work. The school is aware of this and has introduced a 'work your socks off' campaign which is encouraging pupils be more self-reliant and to persevere. Pupils are enthusiastic about this. Extensive staff development is having a positive impact and teaching assistants play an important and effective role in consolidating and developing pupils' skills and confidence. Pupils are clear about their targets and take pride in explaining them to their parents. Home-school links are now stronger and parents appreciate the sessions that have been held to explain how pupils learn mathematics today, so they are better able to support their children at home. The youngest pupils enjoy their hands-on experiences of mathematics due to the skilled teaching of the class teacher and her assistant, as well as the help they receive from parent volunteers. The older pupils are enthused by the excellent questioning and support they receive in their class and exceptionally good use is made of interactive technology to develop their understanding of the processes involved in multi-stage operations.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive and the strong focus on their spiritual, moral social and cultural development reported in the last inspection has been maintained. Pupils behave well throughout the day and are keen to take on responsibilities. When they wander briefly off task it is often related to a lack of maturity. Even the youngest, however, show they know how to keep safe. Pupils enjoyed designing the garden for quiet reflection. Safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements and give no cause for concern.

The quality of leadership and management of the school

Leadership and management have tackled the issues raised at the last inspection robustly. The roles in this small school are increasingly shared and delegated. Everyone is now actively playing their part in regularly monitoring pupils' progress and in supporting the focus on raising standards through better self-evaluation. There is more cross-school moderation of pupils' work and the insight gained from this allows the school to adjust its approach as necessary. Governors have kept a vigilant watch on the school's progress against its development plan through the

curriculum committee. Many of them give up their time to attend the useful annual 'whole school review' days. The school has had good external support from both the school's improvement partner and the local authority. There is a succession plan in place to ensure stability for the school.

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 December 2010

- Raise attainment in all subjects, and particularly in mathematics, by:
 - ensuring pupils' skills are built on step by step, practised regularly and applied in different and relevant contexts.
- Improve and accelerate the learning and progress of all pupils by:
 - involving the pupils more actively in their learning and understanding of the progress they are making
 - ensuring that pupils are consistently involved in setting targets for improving their work
 - using information on how well pupils are doing to set tasks in lessons which meet individual pupils' needs more precisely.
- Strengthen the leadership of all staff by:
 - building the capacity and confidence of all teachers to make a consistently stronger contribution to school self-evaluation and improvement through