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28 March 2012

Mr A Smith  
The Headteacher  
Bursledon Church of England Infant School  
Long Lane  
Southampton  
SO31 8BZ

Dear Mr Smith

### **Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools with additional focus on behaviour: monitoring inspection of Bursledon Church of England Infant School**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 27 March 2012 and for the information which you provided during the inspection. Please pass on my thanks to your pupils and staff who made time to meet me.

Since the last inspection a new leader responsible for the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 has been appointed.

As a result of the inspection on 5 October 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. The effectiveness of the school in improving pupils' behaviour is also satisfactory

#### **Achievement of pupils at the school**

Children entering the Early Years Foundation Stage arrive with skills that are well below those expected for their age. They make accelerated progress in this part of the school. Due to their low starting points, children join Key Stage 1 with skills just below those expected for their age. The validated data at the end of Year 2 show that attainment in reading has risen sharply to broadly average for the first time in three years. Attainment in writing and mathematics remains significantly low, although there is a clear trend of improvement over time.

Book scrutiny, lesson observations and internal data indicate that many pupils are making better progress throughout the school. This is a result of improved teaching and effective interventions. However, the school is fully aware that inconsistencies still remain between classes and subjects. Consequently, despite a growing number of pupils making stronger progress, attainment overall remains low with some remaining at risk of underachievement. The nurture provision for the most

vulnerable pupils, and targeted interventions for those pupils with disabilities and special educational needs, ensure that these pupils make similar progress to their peers.

The introduction of a dedicated support adviser has helped to improve attendance. Stronger links have been created with families and support is offered to enable pupils to attend more regularly. As a result, there is a general trend of improvement such that more pupils are now attending school regularly.

### **The quality of teaching**

During this visit lesson observations revealed inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. In the majority of lessons observed pupils made at least satisfactory progress, with some making good progress. In the strongest lessons teachers used their strong subject knowledge and highly effective questioning to develop pupils' knowledge and check their understanding of key concepts. Planning reflected the needs of different groups of pupils. Adults provided regular opportunities to ensure pupils understood what they were learning and to assess the progress they were making. This, along with an emphasis on the use of practical equipment, meant that pupils were eager and keen to learn. For example, in Key Stage 1 in mathematics pupils used the number square in the playground to develop their understanding of 'more than' and 'less than'. In Reception grandparents shared their childhood experiences of Easter. Children were then encouraged to develop their speaking and listening skills through recounting some of their most precious moments. However, in a minority of lessons the pace of learning was slow and, as a result, pupils became restless. Planning did not always reflect the needs of different pupils. During group work learning support staff were used effectively to challenge pupils, but this strong practice was not always evident during the introduction to lessons. Within pupils' books there is evidence that marking has improved over time and that adults are now beginning to provide pupils with their next steps to learning. Although pupils are set targets in literacy and numeracy these are not always used effectively by teachers in lessons. Consequently, pupils are not always clear about their learning targets and this restricts their progress.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

A few parents and carers spoken to confirmed that behaviour had improved since the last inspection. Pupils feel very safe in school and their attitudes to learning are highly positive. Behaviour in the majority of classrooms is supporting their learning. However, discussions with pupils and school logs indicate that behaviour in the playground is not always as purposeful as in classrooms. The school has introduced different areas within the playground for reading and play as well as a 'time out' bench. A growing number of adults is beginning to support pupils in their play. However, the school recognises that these new initiatives are at the early stages of development and require time to impact fully on pupils' behaviour overall. Pupils are given regular opportunities to share their feelings through circle time. In classrooms

pupils work well together in pairs and small groups, these opportunities to work together are developing pupils' social skills through listening and sharing their views.

### **The quality of leadership and management of the school**

The local authority has provided effective support in developing the capacity of middle leaders to manage their responsibilities. As a result of regular monitoring, middle leaders are now beginning to contribute to school improvements. The quality of teaching has improved as a result of leaders working alongside class teachers and providing advice on planning lessons based on a revised curriculum. Book scrutiny has led to changes to marking so that most pupils now receive clear guidance on how to improve. The progress of pupils classified as disabled or who have special educational needs is now being tracked. Regular meetings are held with support staff so that interventions can be monitored and evaluated. Consequently, these pupils are making similar progress to their peers. Despite these improvements, some inconsistencies still remain across the school. Senior leaders are in the process of clarifying their performance management procedures so that all adults are consistently held to account.

The assessment leader has refined the school's tracking documents so that they now provide an overview of the progress that different year groups and individuals are making. These are now being used by all staff to evaluate pupils' achievement and target groups that are in danger of underachieving. However, the school is aware the current tracking system requires further refinement so that all pupils are included in their data and the attainment of the more able pupils is tracked more thoroughly.

Outcomes are rising as a result of the contribution of leaders at all levels to improve attendance, behaviour and the quality of teaching.

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

Susan Gadd  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

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

- Accelerate pupils' progress and raise attainment through:
  - developing the curriculum so that planning clearly identifies the expected learning outcomes for different groups
  - targeting questions to specific pupils in groups or lessons in order to gauge whether their tasks are too easy or too difficult
  - ensuring that, within lessons, teachers regularly check whether pupils have achieved their lesson target so that they can move on to more challenging activities when ready.
- Build on and extend the procedures in place for promoting good attendance, especially through ensuring that parents recognise the importance of this in supporting their children's education.
- Enhance middle managers' skills in supporting monitoring and development in order to increase their contribution to improvement work.