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13 December 2012

Miss H Curtis  
Headteacher  
Swaffham Prior Church of England Primary School  
Station Road  
Swaffham Prior  
Cambridge  
CB25 0LG

Dear Miss Curtis

**Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Swaffham Prior Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 12 December 2012, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on the findings of my visit. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in 4 October 2012. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

**Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher and the subject leader for mathematics, two representatives from the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority. The school improvement plans were evaluated.

**Context**

There have been no staff changes since the inspection. However, a foundation governor and two associate members have been added to the governing body.

**Main findings**

Senior leaders and governors have begun to take effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. Following the visit to the school, HMI recommends that further action is taken to ensure that the quality of teaching is routinely monitored so that the headteacher and other senior leaders can effectively evaluate the impact of the steps taken to accelerate pupils' learning.

The outcomes of the recent inspection came as no surprise to the school. Senior leaders recognise the need to strengthen teaching and accelerate pupil progress. Plans were already in place to address the issues that were identified, and these have been sensibly modified since the inspection. The 'raising achievement plan', alongside termly operational plans, sets a clear agenda for improvement, with suitable procedures to monitor and review the impact of the actions taken. Since the inspection the headteacher has taken steps to develop:

- better teaching with more sharply-focused lesson planning
- more effective marking and feedback to pupils
- regular checks on the quality of teaching and learning.

The experienced governing body has a proven track record of providing effective support, but accepts that it needs to provide more challenge by focusing more sharply on raising achievement. Governors have responded positively to the inspection findings, and are developing their role with more frequent governor visits and through training from the local authority.

Ofsted will continue to monitor the school until its next section 5 inspection.

### **External support**

The local authority knows the school well and has, over the last 18 months, provided good guidance for the new headteacher and suitable challenge for the school. Following the recent inspection, further support has been provided through the local authority's 'Getting to good' programme. In addition, external consultants have already provided guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage and planned support for the governing body.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Cambridgeshire Local Authority and the Diocese of Ely.

Yours sincerely

Paul Brooker  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**