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9 October 2013

Mrs A Williams  
Headteacher  
Forest Row Church of England Primary School  
School Lane  
Hartfield Road  
Forest Row  
RH18 5DZ

Dear Mrs Williams

**Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Forest Row Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 8 October 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report 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 July 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- Include long-term targets in the school improvement plan for children at the end of the Reception year, for the progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and for the quality of teaching.
- Draw up a timeline for the proposed actions in the school improvement plan to ensure that a fast pace of development is maintained.
- Collate all the information gathered from the monitoring of teaching so that school leaders have a comprehensive picture of each teacher's strengths and areas for development across a range of subjects.

## **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you, the deputy headteacher and three members of the governing body. I spoke to a representative of the local authority by telephone to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school improvement plan was evaluated. I also looked at teachers' long- and medium-term curriculum plans, information on pupils' progress and the outcomes of some of the checks made on teaching and learning.

## **Context**

A newly qualified teacher has joined the school in the Reception class. The headteacher has temporarily taken the role of leader of the Early Years and Key Stage 1 provision.

## **Main findings**

Senior leaders have continued to build on the positive aspects of the school's work that were noted at the recent section 5 inspection. They have a clear understanding of what needs to be done to improve the school and have written a comprehensive action plan that tackles all the aspects of the school's work that require improvement to be 'good'. The plan has clear, measurable targets for pupils' overall attainment and progress, but lacks specific targets for some important groups of pupils such as disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Furthermore, given that school leaders are ambitious for the school to get to 'good' by December 2014, the timescales to implement some changes in the improvement plan are too long.

The subject leader for mathematics has acted swiftly to accelerate pupils' progress in this subject. She has already analysed pupils' test papers to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding and is reviewing how calculation and problem-solving skills are taught in all age groups.

The headteacher and other senior staff visit classrooms regularly and check teachers' planning and the work in pupils' books. At present, they do not collate all this information to provide a full overview of each teacher's strengths and areas for development. Teachers do not have individual support plans to help them improve.

The governing body is increasingly involved in monitoring the work of the school. This year, governors each have responsibility to check on the progress of a specific priority in the school's action plan. There are plans for governors to visit classrooms to see improvements for themselves and to meet subject leaders to discuss progress.

HMI will visit the school in the summer term to review progress and assess the school's readiness for re-inspection.

## **External support**

The local authority is monitoring the school closely and regular visits from the allocated adviser ensure that school leaders are supported effectively. The school engages well with training programmes for school leaders and teaching staff run by the local authority. For example, two teachers are participating in the 'Every lesson Counts' training course this term. School leaders work also closely with other local schools in the Ashdown Alliance. They have made good use of a range of opportunities for joint training and staff development.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for East Sussex.

Yours sincerely

Melanie Knowles

**Her Majesty's Inspector**