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6 November 2013

Mrs J Lees  
Executive Headteacher  
St Matthew's High Brooms Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School  
Powder Mill Lane  
High Brooms  
Tunbridge Wells  
TN4 9DY

Dear Mrs Lees

**Special measures monitoring inspection of St Matthew's High Brooms  
Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 6 November 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in June 2013.

**Evidence**

During this inspection, meetings were held with the executive headteacher, both heads of school, both special educational needs coordinators, the Chair and another member of the governing body, and two representatives from the local authority. The local authority's statement of action and the school's action plan were evaluated. A range of the school's documentation was analysed.

**Context**

The executive headteacher has agreed to remain at the school until a substantive headteacher is in post. She is a Local Leader of Education and the headteacher of Langton Green Primary School, a nearby outstanding school. A second part-time head of school has been appointed on a temporary basis to join the existing part-

time head of school. She is the deputy headteacher at St John's Church of England Primary School, a local good school. Two teachers, one teaching assistant and three members of support staff have left the school since the inspection. Two teachers, three teaching assistants and one member of support staff have since joined the school. The Chair and a number of other members have left the governing body. A new Chair of the Governing Body has now been appointed, who is also Chair of the Governing Body at St Mark's Church of England Primary School, another local good school.

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

Senior leaders are making significant improvements. The school's action plan rightly includes ambitious targets for improvement, and these are being met and sometimes exceeded. As a result, the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement are improving rapidly. Teachers have had effective training about the elements of good and outstanding teaching. Intensive and effective support has been put in place to improve the weakest teaching. The process for checking on teachers' performance is now much more rigorous. Leaders observe lessons very frequently, giving precise advice to teachers about how to improve which is checked during subsequent observations. Senior leaders regularly meet with teachers to discuss pupils' progress, meaning that teachers are now much more accountable for pupils' achievement. The school's records of lesson observations show that teaching is improving rapidly. The provisional 2013 Key Stages 1 and 2 results represent a sharp increase in pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics. The school's information about pupils' current progress indicates that this improvement is continuing.

Other leaders in the school are beginning to have a positive impact. Their roles and responsibilities are now very clear and they are working hard to improve teaching and pupils' achievement. They lead training for teachers, check that the quality of pupils' work is good enough and make sure that teachers' planning is of a high standard. They track pupils' progress in detail, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and those pupils eligible for the pupil premium. If pupils are at risk of falling behind, these leaders intervene and make sure that appropriate action is taken by teachers and teaching assistants to get pupils back on track.

Governors continue to challenge school leaders well. They receive useful information about pupils' achievement, including those pupils eligible for the pupil premium, which allows them to ask challenging questions. The reconstitution of the governing body means that all governors now have clear, specific and appropriate roles. This restructure has ensured that the work of the governing body is more streamlined, efficient and effective. The appointment of an experienced and effective Chair of the Governing Body has made sure that governors' actions are fully focused on the

school's improvement. Governors regularly evaluate the progress the school is making, including visiting the school to collect their own evidence of improvements.

Teachers have been given useful opportunities to observe good and outstanding teaching at Langton Green Primary School. Teachers and leaders from both schools have worked together to improve teachers' lesson planning, the accuracy of teachers' assessments, the quality of action plans, and the way pupils' achievement is tracked and analysed. There is a strong and effective partnership between these two schools.

The local authority has secured strong leadership for the school until a substantive headteacher is appointed by brokering the continuation of the executive headteacher's role, the temporary appointment of a new head of school, and the appointment of the new Chair of the Governing Body. It also brokered the links with Langton Green Primary School and provided financial support for this partnership. Local authority officers visit the school regularly to provide valuable advice, challenge and support, including for the governing body, and to evaluate the progress the school is making. The local authority statement of action addresses all of the areas for improvement effectively.

Following the monitoring inspection these judgements were made:

The local authority statement of action is fit for purpose.

The school's action plan is fit for purpose.

The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Kent and the Diocese of Rochester. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Matthew Haynes  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**