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6 December 2013

Andrew Frolish  
Headteacher  
St Mary's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School  
Stonehouse Road  
Hadleigh  
Ipswich  
IP7 5BH

Dear Mr Frolish

**Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to St Mary's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Hadleigh**

Following my visit to your school on 5 December 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 September 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:

- refine the action plan so that timescales and responsibilities for monitoring are absolutely clear to all staff and governors. Within the plan, increasingly incorporate key senior leaders to monitor, evaluate and develop the areas of work for which they are responsible.

## **Evidence**

During the visit, I held meetings with you, five members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority, and of the diocese, to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. We visited every classroom together, looked closely at pupils' books and spoke to a number of pupils about their work and the changes you are making. I reviewed your action plan and considered other documentation including your new marking and feedback policy, your monitoring documents and the local authority's analysis of achievement data.

## **Context**

Since the inspection, a temporary teacher has been appointed to cover the position of a senior leader seconded to work in another school. The seconded leader will return to the school next term.

## **Main findings**

You are addressing the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection with determination. Your development plan identifies the actions you will take to bring about improvements. It includes clear information for governors and staff showing what success is expected from these actions. However, you recognised it could be improved by including specific dates and details relating to who will monitor what is happening and when. You also recognised that you could accelerate the rate of improvement by sharing leadership actions more readily with other senior leaders.

There are early signs that pupil progress in mathematics is improving. This is because you are identifying gaps in pupils' mathematical knowledge more accurately and using this knowledge to shape lesson planning. The support of an advanced skills teacher is enabling individual teachers to improve their subject knowledge and confidence when teaching mathematics. You have also implemented the use of procedures to make certain that, where pupils experience particular difficulties in understanding mathematics, these are understood and specific intervention is in place.

The new marking and feedback policy is making a positive difference. Marking of pupils' work is evident in books in every class, teachers have responded well to the expectations you have all agreed together and are providing pupils with feedback about their work. There are already some very strong examples of this that you can use to develop a consistently high quality across all classes and subjects. You have changed the structure of the morning so that all pupils have the opportunity to revisit and respond to the marking of their work regularly. Many of the children spoken to talked positively about the changes and about the support they are receiving for their learning. A recent meeting in which staff worked together to talk about and mark pupils' work has improved the consistency of approach and similar meetings will continue this improvement. We observed a practical example of the

use of improved feedback in a Key Stage 1 class where children evaluated their use of pattern and resources to create a collage fish using information shared prior to the task with precision.

We discussed your regular and detailed records from monitoring these improvements and agreed that you could make them more effective by including specific comments on the extent to which marking is improving pupils' progress.

Governors are contributing to the school's improving performance. They have monitored the implementation of the new marking policy and planned further visits to monitor the key actions and priorities. As we discussed, specific identification of these is necessary in your action plan. Governors know that it will be important to keep a watchful eye on the impact of financial spending on improving provision in mathematics particularly for the least and most able learners. Governors have met with staff to ensure that the workload associated with improving the school's effectiveness is manageable. They are working with you and the diocese to provide support for this.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

### **External support**

The local authority is providing you with responsive support through a challenge partner who has significant experience in developing literacy and mathematics provision. Appropriate plans are in place to use her skills to analyse pupils' work so that staff can receive personalised professional development.

The diocesan adviser knows the school well and is working with you and governors to support staff through the changes required. You are networking closely with other local diocesan headteachers to increase the drive for improvement in all aspects of the school's work.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Suffolk and the Director of Education for St Edmundsbury and Ipswich Diocese.

Yours sincerely

Prue Rayner  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**