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6 December 2013

Ms Jacqueline Reed  
Headteacher  
Littlebourne Church of England Primary School  
Church Road  
Canterbury  
CT3 1XS

Dear Ms Reed

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

Following my visit to your school on 3 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:

- improve the action plan so that:
  - it is always clear what actions are necessary in order to bring about the desired changes
  - the monitoring role of governors and leaders is made more explicit
  - progress towards goals can be more easily checked
  
- review end of key stage targets to ensure they are challenging and aspirational.

## **Evidence**

During the visit meetings were held with you, subject leaders for English and mathematics, governors and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I evaluated the school improvement plan and visited each classroom to see the school at work.

## **Context**

Since the inspection in September 2013 one teacher has gone on maternity leave. Her post has been filled by a temporary teacher. Another teacher returns from maternity leave in January 2014 and will take on the role of mathematics subject leader. The Chair of Governors has recently resigned and a replacement has not yet been appointed.

## **Main findings**

Although you and the staff were disappointed by the outcome of the inspection in September 2013 there is a shared determination to make improvements so the school is judged to be 'good'.

Your action plan focuses on the right areas of the school's work and includes all the areas for improvement from the inspection. However the organisation of the plan is muddled. It is not always clear enough exactly what actions are required to reach the intended goals and how progress will be checked. The targets for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 have not been recently reviewed so they are not always challenging enough, especially for more able pupils.

You have helpfully begun to involve teachers more in analysing assessment data for their class. As a result teachers have greater understanding of the progress of different groups of pupils. They are starting to use the information to plan lessons which better meet the needs of all their pupils. This work is at too early a stage to see if it is leading to improvements in standards.

There is some outstanding teaching in the school which provides a strong role model for other staff. Recent training has appropriately focused on ensuring teachers move lessons on at a good pace so pupils remain well motivated. Senior leaders will need to check that this training is being put into place by all teachers and that this remains the case following staff changes in January 2014.

The subject leader for English has a good understanding of the actions needed to develop reading and writing across the school. A visit to a local school with outstanding practice has been helpful to stimulate improvements such as the introduction of 'Wow' folders (examples of best work) to raise expectations of all pupils, especially high achievers, to improve their writing. There is a well-thought-

out plan to help pupils develop a range of strategies in reading, although this work has not yet been started.

In mathematics the subject leader has helpfully updated the calculations policy to help teachers plan for good progress in pupils' skills. She has highlighted to teachers the need to make equipment more accessible in lessons to increase pupils' independence in learning. The new targets for mental mathematics are promoted well in assemblies and motivate pupils to achieve. You have wisely involved the returning subject leader in leading some of the changes and planning the future development of mathematics so momentum is maintained.

The resignation of the Chair of Governors has left this aspect of leadership vulnerable, especially as some governors are recently appointed and unsure of their roles and responsibilities. The local authority intends to use its recent review of governance to provide targeted training. This will be crucial to help governors support and challenge the school effectively. The governors' role in monitoring the school action plan also needs to be clarified.

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**

You are making effective use of local authority personnel to coach teachers and develop areas such as assessment. The local authority has also provided good support by funding the mentorship of a newly qualified teacher, enabling the deputy headteacher to focus more closely on other aspects of her role. You already have some ad-hoc links with other schools which have provided helpful ideas such as 'Wow' folders for writing and I encourage you to seek more formal partnerships with good and outstanding schools to benefit further from practice elsewhere.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Kent and the Diocese of Canterbury.

Yours sincerely

Amanda Gard  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**