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Mr R Sawyerr
Executive Headteacher
Shefford Church of England Primary School
Wantage Road
Hungerford
RG17 7DB

Dear Mr Sawyerr

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to the federated schools Shefford Church of England Primary School and Chaddleworth St Andrew's Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to your schools on 13 May 2015, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. 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 schools since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the schools were judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in January 2015. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. At their previous section 5 inspections the schools were also judged to require improvement.

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:

- amend the school improvement plan to:
 - show how you will develop all aspects of leadership
 - be clear about what you expect the impact to be on pupils' achievement, so that you can demonstrate your actions are improving the school, and governors can hold you to account

- further develop English and mathematics subject leaders to help you identify and tackle gaps in pupils' learning, so that pupils are taught all the skills they need.

Evidence

During my visit, I met with you, subject leaders and members of the governing body to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I also had a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority, visited classrooms and looked at pupils' work. I evaluated the school improvement plan and reviewed other documentation.

Main findings

You have responded with purpose and focus in tackling the areas for improvement identified in the previous report. Your action plan shows how you intend to make many of the required improvements, but it is not clear how you will develop some aspects of leadership. Also, governors cannot check that your actions are improving the school, because the plan does not show the expected impact on pupils' achievement.

Governance is improving. Governors sensibly undertook a review to identify how they can become more effective. The governing body has already implemented most of the suggested changes. For example, their monitoring visits now focus more sharply on the areas for improvement.

Subject leaders are clearer about their roles. They identify aspects of their subjects which can be improved but are not clear enough about what will best support pupils to learn more. The work in pupils' books suggests that some teachers are not teaching aspects of English and mathematics in sufficient depth. Although subject leaders had identified this, they had not taken action.

You accurately identify the features of good teaching and have worked effectively with teachers to improve their practice. When you observe lessons, you now give more useful, focused feedback. Teachers say your comments are now clearer and easier to act upon. However, your judgements do not take as much account of pupils' learning over time as they need to.

Teachers are becoming more skilled at meeting the needs of more able pupils. The recent training has resulted in teachers being clearer about how to extend pupils' thinking and enable them to learn more. The weekly sharing of good practice amongst teachers is enabling them to learn from each other.

You have made sensible changes to the support given to pupils who have fallen behind. You and the deputy headteacher are now planning carefully how to meet the needs of individual pupils and help them to accelerate their learning. Pupils are now supported better through regular, well-planned group or individual sessions.

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

External support

The schools are supported well by local authority advisors and by external consultants, who have a thorough understanding of what is required. A good example of this is the use of the pupil premium (government funding to support disadvantaged pupils) and special educational needs review, carried out by the local authority, to help you to be clear about what is and is not helping to accelerate learning. It is positive that the local authority have also secured funding for a National Leader of Education (a government programme which utilises the skills of headteachers of outstanding schools) to be associated with the school.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for West Berkshire.

Yours sincerely

Louise Adams

Her Majesty's Inspector