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2 October 2017

Mrs Gill Silk  
Ferring CofE Primary School  
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Dear Mrs Silk

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Ferring CofE Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 18 September 2017, 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 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 December 2016. 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 in order for the school to become a good school.

The school should take further action to:

- make sure that when monitoring the quality of teaching, learning and assessment leaders maintain a focus on the impact that new systems are having on pupils' progress
- make sure that the most able pupils are challenged consistently to achieve.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior leaders, members of the governing body, and representatives of the local authority to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. The school improvement and action plans were evaluated. I read a range of other documents, including

governors' minutes, monitoring visit reports, school progress information, parental survey information and teaching and learning monitoring records. I met with subject leaders to discuss their roles and scrutinise some pupils' work. I also spoke with pupils during lessons.

## **Context**

Last year, due to the long-term sickness absence of the headteacher, the deputy headteacher became acting headteacher. Some additional and useful support was put in place to assist the deputy headteacher with making the improvements needed to respond to the previous inspection report. The headteacher had a phased return over the summer and is now back full time. During this time, new systems and procedures were put in place ready for September. These are now helping to improve the quality of teaching and learning and of pupils' progress.

## **Main findings**

Leaders have made sure that they have accurate information on pupils' starting points by moderating their assessments with other schools. This process is providing a secure baseline against which they set clear and suitably challenging targets for pupils. As a result, teachers now know very clearly who the most able pupils are. Teachers are starting to use this information to plan learning so that individuals are supported and stretched appropriately.

Subject leaders for English and mathematics have been supported in fine tuning their skills. They have set out what needs to get better in their subject areas very clearly, linking their own action plans to the overarching school plan. Your leaders have helped teachers to achieve the school's new vision for English and mathematics. New resources are helping teachers to concentrate on the skills pupils need to improve. Your monitoring is already highlighting areas of strength. Although the difference made by their work cannot yet be seen in published performance information, I saw that teachers are putting their ideas into practice well. As a result, current pupils are starting to make more progress in English and mathematics.

Last year, you were disappointed that some pupils did not quite make the progress in mathematics that you were hoping for. You have acted swiftly to address this, so that current Year 6 pupils are tracked accurately. Regular assessment is giving you precise information about what pupils can and cannot yet do. Teachers are using this information well to plan pupils' next steps in learning. In addition, leaders have made sure that mathematical reasoning skills are introduced lower down the school. During my visit, I could see that your work to improve pupils' outcomes in mathematics is developing effectively.

Teachers know that a key barrier to the progress of some pupils is their ability to read and understand what the questions are asking them when they are in a written

form. Teachers understand this, so are making sure that pupils become familiar with the different question types from a young age.

Pupils are starting to extend their writing and write for various purposes from a younger age than previously. Teachers now prioritise the 'journey of writing', spending time making sure that pupils know how to plan their work before attempting writing. You have also made sure that pupils take responsibility to proofread and correct their work. This is part of your new 'non negotiables' for learning, and includes a common approach to ensuring that spelling is improved across the school. This is helping pupils to make better progress than they have in the past.

Leaders have started to make sure that evaluations of the quality of teaching are linked closely to the progress that pupils make in lessons and over time. Last year, due to turbulence at leadership level, the monitoring of teaching did not happen as frequently as intended. However, since the summer term monitoring has been frequent, and leaders have acted on initial findings effectively. They have used the information they have collected to set out their basic expectations of the quality of teaching, as well as to offer individual support.

You, leaders and governors have an accurate view of the improvements that have been made since the last inspection and where there is still work to do. Your plans to improve the school are sharply focused and explicit about what success will look like. You have set out detailed schedules to monitor how consistently new systems and procedures are used. However, your team does not always consider the impact that changes are having on the quality of teaching and adjust plans accordingly so that pupils' progress is maximised.

### **External support**

The school is drawing on external support very well. Governors brokered a useful review of the use of the pupil premium which was carried out by the leader of Seaside Primary school. You have used advice from this review to more finely tune how funding for this group of pupils is spent. The tracking systems you have used have helped you to identify how rapidly disadvantaged pupils make progress. Extra support for pupils is helping to fill any gaps that they may have. As a result, disadvantaged pupils have started to make more rapid progress than previously. You have decided, rightly, to use the new tracking system throughout the school, so that you have an accurate understanding of each pupil's progress and attainment.

The local authority acquired the support of an assistant headteacher from Rake Primary School to support improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. This has helped leaders to identify necessary improvements and has enabled them to set up clear and consistent expectations of teaching at Ferring CofE Primary.

In addition, the school has been supported by a school improvement adviser who

has helped leaders to make sure that their assessments in English are accurate. The local authority has also supported the school by helping governors with the development and implementation of the action plan and by regularly checking the school's progress with the deputy headteacher.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Diocese of Chichester, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for West Sussex. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Catherine Old  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**