



24 January 2007

Mr Simon Temple  
St Peter's Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School  
Mount Pleasant  
Aylesford  
Kent  
ME20 7BE

Dear Mr Temple

#### OFSTED MONITORING OF SCHOOLS WITH NOTICE TO IMPROVE

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 16 January 2007, for the time you gave to our phone discussions, and for the information which you provided before and during my visit.

As a result of the inspection on 14 June 2006, the school was asked to accelerate the progress the pupils make, particularly in writing, and make more effective use of assessment information. Senior staff were required to improve the way they monitored the pupils' work. The role of the governors also required some review. Many of these developments had begun before the inspection in June, but the pace of change has accelerated since September.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making good progress in addressing the issues for improvement.

Test results in 2006 show that the steady trend of improvements in standards over the last three years has continued and the school is beginning to redress the legacy of underachievement. The school has made satisfactory progress in raising achievement although there is further to go to ensure the more able pupils in Key Stage 2 reach their potential. The improvements the school has made to writing have moved at a good pace. Work in books shows better opportunities for pupils to write extended pieces in a range of genres. Most pupils are now working at a suitable level for their age although the presentation of work is still not as good as it should be. The spelling and handwriting policy is being further refined to include a better emphasis on teaching phonics and cursive script and this policy requires urgent implementation.

Teachers' expectations have been raised and targets set are more challenging. There is a comprehensive data collection system in place and the

teachers use this to set and review targets as well as for lesson planning. Good systems have been developed to help pupils evaluate their own work and these are used consistently throughout the school. Work is marked well and the pupils know what they have to do to improve. The good progress that has been made in this area demonstrates the capacity of the school to address the remaining legacy of underachievement.

The headteacher has worked determinedly since the inspection to ensure rigorous and regular monitoring of lessons. The process is well understood, the school judgements are accurate, and feedback is focused on what needs to be done to improve. Because of this work, the quality of teaching has remained sound and there is much good practice developing despite a period of significant staff turnover.

The local authority (LA) has also provided satisfactory support. Their advice and monitoring have been useful in helping the school to focus on improving standards. The relationship between the school and the LA has improved and the joint working with the new school improvement partner is effective. Further help to ensure the school is aware of a wider range of good practice, particularly in relation to addressing underachievement, is required.

The governing body have made a number of important changes in the way they work and have made outstanding progress in addressing the issues identified in the last inspection. The governors have been successful in recruiting a new foundation governor with greater experience in standards. They are fully involved in monitoring the school plans and decisions are based on secure evidence. They provide a high degree of challenge to both the school and LA and discharge their responsibilities well.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school.

Yours sincerely

Ann Berger  
Her Majesty's Inspector