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25 September 2007

Mrs S Hill
The Headteacher
Brookland Church of England Primary School
Brookland
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Dear Mrs Hill

**SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF BROOKLAND CHURCH
OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Following my visit to your school on 18 and 19 September 2007, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures in March 2007. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – satisfactory.

Newly qualified teachers may be appointed.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be posted on the Ofsted website. Please inform the Regional Inspection Service Provider of any factual inaccuracies within 24 hours of the receipt of this letter.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the chair of governors, the Managing Director of Children's Families and Education Directorate for Kent, and the diocese.

Yours sincerely

Robert Ellis
H M Inspector

SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING OF BROOKLAND CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Report from the first monitoring inspection: 18 and 19 September 2007

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents, and met with the headteacher, subject coordinators, the chair and vice chair of governors, representatives from the local authority (LA) and the school council.

Context

Since the school was inspected in March 2007 one teacher has taken maternity leave and has been replaced by a newly qualified teacher on a one year contract.

Achievement and standards

Unvalidated results in national tests in 2007 indicate that standards rose and that most pupils achieved or exceeded their targets. Observation of lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work support the school's view that standards are rising but that there remain pockets of underachievement which are being addressed.

Personal development and well-being

Pupils' behaviour is generally good in the classroom and very little off task activity was seen. The few instances of low level disruptive behaviour that did occur were dealt with quickly and efficiently so that they did not impact on learning. Most pupils have positive attitudes to learning and work well on their own and cooperate with each other when working in small groups. However, some pupils are over reliant on support and direction from adults and do not take responsibility for their own learning. Around the school, pupils' behaviour is generally good and well ordered so that public spaces are normally safe and calm. Pupils generally understand what is expected of them and respond appropriately to the school's system of rewards and sanctions. The school has revised its attendance policy which it has communicated to parents, stressing the importance of regular attendance. Pupils who have poor patterns of attendance and punctuality are appropriately challenged and supported and, as a result of the actions taken, attendance and punctuality have improved and are now satisfactory.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in March 2007:

- apply more rigorous procedures to raise attendance – good.

Quality of provision

Teaching is satisfactory overall and good in some respects. Teachers and other adults have good relationships with their pupils and provide good role models. Tasks

are increasingly well matched to pupils' needs and interests and planning is generally based on an accurate assessment of pupils' prior learning and experience. Most lessons provide an interesting range of good activities that enable pupils to enjoy their learning and have opportunities to achieve. Teachers' planning now provides more opportunities for the pupils to develop and apply their problem solving and investigation skills in mathematics and science. Although a good start has been made on matching tasks and activities to pupils' targets and prior attainment, this continues to be a developing aspect of the school's work and remains a priority for improvement.

Learning objectives are communicated clearly and pupils are provided with useful success criteria for evaluating their own progress towards the learning objective. However, pupils' self assessment is not yet a common feature of all lessons and the learning objective and individual targets are not revisited as often as they might be so that pupils can be actively involved in assessing their own achievements. Teaching assistants are well deployed to support learning during individual and group activities but they are sometimes underused during the whole class sections of lessons. Some lessons are taught at a brisk pace but others are more pedestrian and provide less challenge, particularly for the most able pupils. Pupils are often provided with key or subject specific vocabulary but many would benefit from displays of frequently used words to assist them with their spelling and writing.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in March 2007:

- match teaching and learning activities to the individual needs of pupils so that they do as well as they should – satisfactory.

Leadership and management

The school has established an accurate baseline from which pupils' progress can be measured. A computer based system is used to track pupils' progress and identify underachievement. Intervention programmes such as the numeracy and literacy workshops, which group pupils by attainment rather than age, are based on information from the tracking system. These and other initiatives are relatively recent and, as a result, their impact on pupils' learning has not yet been fully evaluated. Monitoring of teaching and learning has been supported and moderated by representatives from the LA and has enabled the headteacher to have an accurate picture of strengths and areas for development in teaching. Teachers receive helpful feedback following the observation of their lessons, and support and coaching from LA advisors and consultants are helping teachers to develop their practice and become more effective. Lesson observations mainly focus on the process of teaching and do not have enough emphasis on the learning outcomes for pupils.

Governors have recognised that they could have been more rigorous in challenging the school to improve and have restructured the way that they monitor the school's activities so that each governor has specific responsibilities. This has resulted in a sharper focus on standards and achievement and has strengthened their role as critical friend.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in March 2007:

- improve the evaluation of performance information so that planning for improvement is based on a rigorous and up-to-date analysis of pupils' progress – satisfactory
- improve the monitoring and evaluation of teaching so that strengths can be shared effectively and weaknesses identified and remedied – satisfactory.

External support

The LA has provided well planned intensive support for the school since the inspection in March this year, particularly in relation to improving the quality of teaching and developing monitoring and evaluation. The implementation of actions identified in the LA statement of action is having a positive impact which is demonstrated by rising standards, improvements in teaching and learning, and in the development of leadership and management at all levels.

Priorities for further improvement

- Involve pupils more in evaluating their own progress.
- Use assessment information to match tasks and activities to pupils' challenging targets.