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13 November 2007

Mrs A Hill  
The Headteacher  
Saint George's Church of England School  
Meadow Road  
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Kent DA11 7LS

Dear Mrs Hill

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools

Thank you for the help which you, the deputy chair of governors, the staff and pupils gave when I inspected your school on 31 October 2007. Could I also thank you for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during my visit.

This letter 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.

As a result of the inspection on 16 and 17 October 2006, the school was asked to:

- raise expectations of what the pupils can achieve by ensuring that progress in lessons is achieved and by setting consistently challenging targets
- develop the sixth form curriculum so that it meets the needs and interests of pupils
- sharpen the focus on raising attainment and improve the quality of teaching to ensure that teaching consistently meets the needs of all pupils.

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 and in raising the pupils' achievement.

Regular targeted reviews involving parents and a well developed tracking system have enabled standards to rise in 2007. The results at Key Stage 3 have improved in English at both Level 5 and Level 6. The proportion of pupils attaining Level 6 in English has improved significantly since 2006 and has nearly doubled. In science and mathematics standards were maintained at Level 5, although there was a slight fall in the proportion of pupils attaining Level 6. Standards at Key Stage 4 have also risen, although they remain below the national average. The proportion of pupils attaining five or more GCSE A\* to C grades increased from 45% to 50%, and increased significantly at five or more A\* to C grades including mathematics and English. The pass rate at GCE advanced level has shown a slight increase on the

previous year's performance. The school met its specialist school targets in history and surpassed them in English.

Most pupils are now aware of their challenging National Curriculum targets and what is required to improve their grades. The school has continued to raise expectations by entering pupils early for national examinations in most subjects, with the exception of English, mathematics and science. Results for 2007 demonstrate that pupils entered early are achieving high grades. Pupils welcome the early examination opportunities. One student stated that 'teachers are now pushing them to achieve well'.

The school has improved its support for pupils falling short of attaining GCSE A\* to C grades in the core subjects, particularly in mathematics. Extensive support is now available both during and after school. This work resulted in an increase in the proportion of pupils achieving grade C in 2007. Early indications show that this improvement will continue in 2008.

A much improved vocational curriculum is available in the sixth form, consisting of many new courses. The school has revised its curriculum pathways to ensure that there are opportunities for pupils to follow its specialist college subjects in the humanities as well as in art. The consortium arrangement has enabled the school to increase the breadth of its curriculum further. The school has also increased its 'elective' programme to enable pupils to gain accredited skills which allow them to gain valuable UCAS points as well as employment skills. Pupils are of the view that effective timetabling by the school has resulted in minimal disruption when there is a need to attend classes not timetabled at the school. Students in Year 12 indicate that the school's sixth form guidance was effective at the end of Year 11; they also remarked that the changes in the curriculum have provided more flexibility.

The systematic monitoring of teaching, with a cycle of lesson observations and good support for teachers' development, has increased significantly the proportion of good or better teaching in 2007. Good support from the school's local authority advisor has enabled lesson observation judgements to be standardised. Judgements made by the school match those of the inspector. The learning project introduced for Year 7 pupils has helped to raise the standard of teaching and learning. Pupils noted that teachers now realise that there are different ways that pupils learn and that one to one support is available if required. This work needs to be extended to other year groups.

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

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Samantha Morgan-Price", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Samantha Morgan-Price  
Her Majesty's Inspector