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1 July 2008

Mrs R Perkins  
The Headteacher  
Charleton Church of England Primary School  
West Charleton  
Kingsbridge  
Devon  
TQ7 2AL

Dear Mrs Perkins

Ofsted monitoring of schools with a Notice to Improve

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 24 June 2008 with David Townsend HMI, for the time you gave to our phone discussions, and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. Please pass on our particular thanks to the staff and pupils who met us.

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 9 October 2007, the school was asked to

- improve pupils' standards and achievement in English, mathematics and science
- ensure that all teachers make full use of assessment information to guide their planning and set precise targets for pupils
- build on the skills of subject leaders to enable them to drive forward with improvement plans.

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 pupils' achievement.

Prior to your appointment as substantive headteacher in January 2008, a period of insecurity in leadership meant that the school was unable to make the necessary progress. This led to some shortcomings in the quality of teaching and learning, inconsistent application of policies, low staff morale, and deteriorating behaviour especially amongst older pupils. Your strong leadership and clear sense of direction have ensured that the staff are now united as a team and are enthusiastically working towards improvement. You have successfully established a climate for learning for both adults and pupils. The school is calm, behaviour is good, and there is an optimistic sense of purpose amongst the whole school community. Your

coaching and mentoring of staff have increased their confidence and ensured close team work.

The effect of the instability experienced by the school in recent years is still apparent in terms of the standards being reached in Years 3 to 6. Standards remain below average but are now rising. In the last year there has been accelerated progress for a number of pupils who were previously falling well behind, whilst those pupils who were previously making expected progress are still doing so. Progress in reading and writing, and for some pupils in numeracy, has been particularly good over the last year in Key Stage 2, and pupils are now making expected progress in science. The school has continued its focus on teaching phonics for both reading and spelling. Pupils are now making expected progress in Key Stage 1 in reading, writing and numeracy and so the proportion of children at or above average levels of attainment is rising. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are now making progress in line with that expected for their ability.

More consistent and targeted planning has improved the quality of teaching and learning and pupils say they are enjoying their work more. As a result of work by subject leaders and individual teachers, there are now long and medium term curriculum plans in place and assessment data is now available to support planning so that teaching matches pupils' needs. Systems to ensure that this data is used in day to day lesson planning are now in place but not fully embedded. Evidence of effective differentiation of work to match pupils' needs was seen during lessons observed during the inspection, but scrutiny of planning records indicates that this is not yet consistent. The specific needs of more able pupils are not sufficiently taken into account so they are more often occupied rather than set specific, more challenging learning outcomes. Pupils report, however, that the work they are given is now more challenging and more closely matched to their needs.

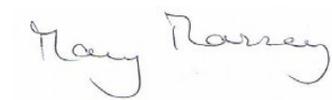
The school has worked hard to formulate layered curricular targets for pupils, which clarify for them both what they must and could achieve in their learning. These targets are clearly displayed and known to most children, particularly as teachers now hold regular progress meetings with individual pupils. The school now recognises through its assessments, where pupils' learning is weaker. For example mental calculation strategies in numeracy need to be more closely linked to the setting of curricular targets so that teachers can challenge learners to move forward in their understanding through guided group work.

Subject leaders' responsibilities are now clearly defined and the leaders feel fully accountable for their work. You set a conscientious role model by taking responsibility for literacy. The subject leaders appreciate the fact that you work alongside them, value their experience, and provide clear guidance. Through regular meetings, focused action planning, and thorough monitoring systems, the three subject leaders are now sharing their practice and working effectively as a team. This is beginning to have an impact on the use of assessment data for planning, and on long term strategies for raising achievement. Comprehensive, rigorous and easily understood monitoring systems for each subject are now in place, for example for checking the quality of teaching and learning, scrutiny of work and analysis of data, but have yet to be fully embedded into day to day practice.

The local authority provided a comprehensive and helpful statement of action. The extensive and very effective support it is providing for the school is having a positive impact on progress. Its coaching and advice has improved the confidence and increased the skills of both staff and governors.

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

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mary Massey".

Mary Massey  
Her Majesty's Inspector