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Mrs Wombwell
The Headteacher
St John's C of E Aided Primary School
Markfield Road
Caterham
Surrey
CR3 6RN

Dear Mrs Wombwell

Ofsted monitoring of schools with a notice to improve

Thank you for the help that you gave when I inspected your school on 9 February 2010 and for the information you provided during my visit. Please pass on my thanks to your senior leadership team, staff, Chair of the Governing Body and pupils.

Since the inspection, the interim headteacher has been appointed in a substantive capacity. A new deputy headteacher has been appointed and the acting deputy headteacher has reverted to an assistant headteacher role.

As a result of the inspection on 6-7 May 2009, the school was asked to:

- raise standards by matching work more closely to pupils' capabilities and help them build on what they have learned before, especially in mathematics and science
- focus attention in all lessons on what pupils are expected to learn and give pupils more opportunities to make their own choices about how they record work
- give pupils clear guidance through marking and ensure that targets for pupils with learning difficulties are sharply focused.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making satisfactory progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the pupils' achievement.

Although it is too early for the full impact of strategies to raise pupils' achievement in mathematics and science to be seen, there are clear signs that progress is beginning to increase. The school's assessments at the end of the autumn term showed that pupils had made satisfactory progress in English, mathematics and science. Evidence seen in lessons and pupils' workbooks supports this. Pupils are making satisfactory



progress overall and, in English, many are making good progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the most able pupils are making similar progress to their classmates.

Well-focused strategies are improving teaching. Lesson plans are more closely matched to pupils' individual needs. Teachers are increasing the variety of activities in lessons and giving pupils more choices about how they find things out and record their work. Pupils say that there are fewer lessons where they just fill in worksheets or listen to the teacher, and many more where they work together to discover things and share their ideas. While teachers are becoming increasingly proficient in using assessment to accurately gauge pupils' progress, leaders are aware that this is not fully consistent across the school and are rightly continuing to maintain this as an improvement priority.

Lesson plans continue to make effective links between activities and what pupils are intended to learn in English, and are increasingly doing so in mathematics and science. This is making it easier for teachers to ensure that learning develops systematically and coherently. It is also helping pupils to be more involved in assessing their own work and working out their own targets. Pupils say that, as a result, they now have a clear awareness of their progress in each subject and know the next steps they need to take to improve. While the quality is not yet fully consistent, marking is beginning to make an effective contribution to pupils' learning. There are more examples where teachers suggest ways for pupils to improve their work.

Individual learning plans for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities have been redesigned. This has made them more meaningful to the pupils and given them sharper targets. They include helpful guidance on how pupils can get the help that they need and how to know when they have succeeded in meeting their targets. Because this is a recent development, it is too early to judge its impact on the pupils' progress.

Developments are being well led by the headteacher, ably supported by other senior leaders and governors. They have a clear and realistic understanding of what has been achieved and what remains to be done. The school is receiving effective support from the local authority and School Improvement Partner. The statement of action produced by the local authority meets all requirements. A diverse range of support is being provided, carefully shaped to meet the school's needs.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

George Rayner
Additional inspector

