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Wednesday 23 June 2010

Mrs Gillian Holmes
Rivenhall Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School
Church Road
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Dear Mrs Holmes

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on Tuesday 22 June 2010, for the time you gave to our planning meeting and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. Please pass on my thanks to the Chair of the Governing Body, the local authority officer, the staff and the pupils.

As a result of the inspection on 7–8 July 2008 the school was asked to address the following matters.

- Enhance and embed the strategies for promoting good attendance.
- Improve the quality of teaching, particularly in mathematics, so that pupils make faster progress in Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Enable pupils to extend their literacy and numeracy skills in all subjects.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school has made satisfactory progress in making improvements and satisfactory progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Since the last inspection there has been an improvement in pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 in English, mathematics and science. Over the last three years attainment has been similar to the national average. Last year there was a further improvement and attainment was slightly above the national average, all pupils achieving two levels of progress since Key Stage 1. Attainment at Key Stage 1 shows that while the majority of pupils are working at age expected levels, there are few pupils working beyond that level in either English or mathematics.



Over a three year period, pupils' progress in Key Stage 2 in English and science has been similar to that expected. Progress in mathematics has not been as good although there was an improvement last year and progress in both mathematics and English was just above that expected. The school's recent teacher assessments for pupils currently at the end of Key Stage 1 show that these pupils are also making good progress in mathematics.

The school's tracking system shows that current attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is expected to be similar to last year. A significant number of pupils, approximately 47%, are on track to achieve a higher level than expected for their age in mathematics. Current teacher assessment for the end of Key Stage 2 shows that the progress pupils have made since Key Stage 1 is good with two thirds of the year group making better than expected progress. Throughout the rest of Key Stage 2 the majority of pupils make satisfactory or better progress in all subjects, but due to the small cohorts this is not consistent across the school

The school's own monitoring records and local authority reports show that overall the quality of teaching is good. During the monitoring visit teaching was judged to be satisfactory overall. There was no inadequate teaching observed but good teaching was seen in only one of the classes. In mathematics and literacy lessons which were judged to be satisfactory, the teachers' input did not always challenge the wide ability range of pupils and stimulate learning.

An interview with pupils and scrutiny of their books shows that they have a good understanding of how the literacy and numeracy skills they have learned are used in other subjects to write and record effectively.

The headteacher, supported by her deputy, has established a clear sense of direction to improve outcomes for pupils. The local authority has provided some useful guidance to the senior leadership team in addressing the inadequate teaching and providing training to improve the quality of lessons. The school is now effectively using its pupil data to set challenging targets and review pupils' progress.

The school has introduced a number of strategies to promote good attendance as well as addressing the small proportion of pupils with persistent absence. This has been successful in some cases. A significant percentage of traveller pupils, who do not attend the same school regularly, impacts on the school's statistical data for attendance which remains lower than the national average.

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

Karen Heath
Lead inspector

