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8 February 2011

Mrs Karen Brooker
The Headteacher
Shepton Beauchamp Church of England Primary School
Shepton Beauchamp
Ilminster
Somerset
TA19 0LQ

Dear Mrs Brooker

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Shepton Beauchamp Church of England Primary School.

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on Tuesday 8 February, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please pass on my thanks to your staff, pupils and governors.

Since the previous inspection there have been significant changes to the school. In January 2011 the school became federated with St Mary and St Peter's School. The new federation has one governing body. Two teachers have left the school and a new teacher has joined the Early Years Foundation Stage. Building work at the school has been completed. The school has changed status from a first school to a primary school. There is a new leadership structure in place with a senior teacher at each school within the federation. Together with the headteacher, they make the leadership team.

As a result of the inspection on 22 and 23 September 2009, the school was asked to address the most important areas for improvement which are set out in the annex to this letter.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school has made:

good progress in making improvements

and

good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.



There are no end-of-Key-Stage-2 results. Current attainment of Year 5 pupils indicates that standards in English and mathematics are high. Teacher assessments and current work indicate that attainment across Key Stage 2 is now above average for most pupils. Standards in mathematics are slightly below those in English. The attainment of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities in English and mathematics is similar to that of their peers. Key Stage 1 results for 2010 demonstrate that standards in writing and mathematics are in line with the national average and above in reading. Pupils' progress is now good. Between Years 2 and 4, pupils make good progress in English with some making outstanding progress. A very small minority make satisfactory progress in mathematics.

The school's leadership has worked with a clear purpose to tackle the key priorities for improvement. There are now detailed and precise plans to tackle identified areas such as the use of more complex vocabulary in writing. Planned actions have followed up procedures and are clearly matched to the school self-evaluation cycle. Priorities have focused on improving the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Lesson observations and school monitoring show that teaching and the use of assessment is now good, resulting in higher attainment and better progress for pupils.

The school has introduced systems to better use assessment information to match activities more closely to pupils' ability levels. Targeted activities in Years 2 to 5 are now enabling younger pupils to use mathematical language well to describe, draw and make three-dimensional shapes. Older pupils are able to independently apply measuring skills accurately to measure obtuse and acute angles. The good cross-curricular links promote writing well in a range of contexts such as Second World War diaries. Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. Pupils are now better informed and knowledgeable about how to reach their targets because of improvements to marking.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage now have access to a full range of curriculum experiences indoors and outdoors. The learning environment is improved and enables free choice and independent learning through a range of different exploratory stimuli such as the Space role play area or the outdoor musical zone. Accurate and detailed observations, recorded in learning journeys, are used well to inform planning. The highly skilled teaching assistant carefully delivers discreet daily phonics resulting in significantly improved outcomes for children. As a result of the enhanced provision, combined with improved teaching and tailored curriculum, children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage is now good.

Governors and subject leaders now play a far greater role in monitoring the work of the school. Through a detailed and lengthy consultation with the local authority and community, strong decisions taken have acted in the best interests of pupils. The

new governing body now has explicit roles in monitoring subjects, participating in lesson observations in a systematic and planned way. Governors are now taking strategic decisions, for example to improve engagement with parents and carers. Good training has meant that governors are now much better equipped to challenge the progress pupils are making in mathematics. Subject leaders now report regularly to committees. Through the new federation, joint staff planning, monitoring and training have increased staff knowledge. This approach is contributing well in ensuring a more consistent approach to school procedures and judgements.

Pupils contribute to their own curriculum experiences well, such as choosing to learn about the Second World War following an Armistice Day ceremony. Pupils act as play leaders, take on positions of responsibility and work with younger pupils enabling them to contribute well to their own school community. Recently these experiences have been further enhanced by joint musical productions and sporting events through the newly formed federation. The most recent school development plan includes actions to improve the school's community cohesion. Although the school has made links to schools in Birmingham, and pupils in Key Stage 2 have studied Kenya, initiatives have yet to impact on pupils' understanding of being part of a wider global community.

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

Yours sincerely

Richard Light
Additional Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place September 2009.

- Raise the quality of teaching in the school from satisfactory to good by:
 - ensuring that teachers make consistently good use of assessment data to plan pupils' learning, especially in Years 2 to 5 setting clear and precise learning targets in each lesson that are carefully matched to meet the needs of the different groups of pupils involving pupils in checking their own progress towards these targets during the lesson.
- Accelerate children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - ensuring learning experiences match children's range of abilities and build upon what each child already knows, understands and can do developing a more challenging, stimulating and exciting curriculum so that children can select their own activities, investigate and explore and enjoy purposeful structured play indoors and outdoors.
- Ensure that all subject leaders and governors play a full part in monitoring the school's work, identifying improvement priorities and evaluating the impact of their actions to raise attainment and achievement.
- Devise and implement plans to improve pupils' knowledge and understanding of being part of the United Kingdom and wider global communities.