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23 March 2011

Mrs J Kent  
Headteacher  
St Matthew's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School  
Drift Road  
Blackmoor  
Liss  
Hampshire  
GU33 6BN

Dear Mrs Kent

**Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of St Matthew's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School**

Thank you for the help which you, the staff and pupils of St Matthew's gave me when I inspected your school on 22 March 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information provided before and during my visit. I am grateful to school leaders for the detailed assessment data they provided during the inspection and to those governors and pupils who met with me and who provided a helpful perspective on the school's progress.

As a result of the inspection in March 2010, 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 tackling the issues for improvement and good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Good progress has been made in raising pupils' attainment in both English and mathematics, particularly in improving their skills in writing. Greater opportunities for pupils to write have been systematically planned, not just in literacy lessons but across all lessons, including topics covered in the 'Learning Projects'. The results in the national assessment tests in 2010 showed significant improvement on the previous year, with standards being in line with national figures. These results include a significant improvement in the proportion of pupils who attained at levels above the national expectation at Level 5. Analysis of the school's current assessment data, the review of work in pupils' books and evidence from lessons indicate pupils in all years making good progress towards their end-of-year targets so that most are now at age-related expectations or higher. Pupils described how



they often found writing to be purposeful and interesting and demonstrated great pride in showing their book reviews. They liked the new resources, which were helping them to improve their literacy and use computers enthusiastically when researching topics for the 'Learning Projects'. Pupils' learning in lessons is good. Pupils collaborate well on exciting problem-solving projects such as bridge building, share resources well when carrying out pupil-initiated activities and listen actively to the work and opinions of others.

School leaders have been very successful in raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can do, tracking pupils' attainment and progress against those expectations and determining the next steps which help pupils to progress. Marking is systematic and pupils receive good guidance on what they need to do to improve their work. The school has adopted a new approach, particularly through the Learning Projects, to increase the excitement and creativity in lessons, and pupils value the opportunities these sessions offer. Good progress has been made towards making teaching consistently good.

Governors have responded well to the issues from the last inspection. They are demonstrably more active in the life of the school. They work closely with school leaders to bring about improvement, as seen through their involvement in the Raising Attainment Plan (RAP). Discussions with the governors and a review of their documentation show that they know the school's strengths and areas for development well and that they are providing not only good support but effective challenge to school leaders.

The local authority has taken effective steps to support the school, both in providing a strategic platform to help monitor the school's progress against areas identified for improvement and in providing specialist consultancy support in areas such as literacy. The diocesan authority has supported the school effectively so that the focus on gospel values is used to underpin the drive to raise attainment.

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

Timothy Feast  
Additional Inspector



## Annex

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in March 2010**

- Raise attainment across subjects with a focus on whole-school English and mathematics by:
  - challenging and extending all pupils, especially the more able
  - ensuring learning is purposeful, interesting and inspiring
  - improving the range of texts and resources, including those accessed through computers, to motivate pupils to read and write.
  
- Improve the quality of teaching through the school so that it is consistently good by:
  - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can do
  - checking that lessons focus sharply on exciting and creative learning activities
  - improving marking, so that all pupils receive clear guidance on what they need to do to improve their work.
  
- Ensure that all governors provide high quality support and effectively challenge the school by:
  - playing a more active part in the life of the school
  - working closely with leaders and managers to plan future improvements
  - regularly monitoring their impact.