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19 May 2011

Mrs C Chalk
The Headteacher
Warminster Sambourne Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School
Sambourne Road
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Dear Mrs Chalk

Notice to improve: monitoring inspection of Warminster Sambourne Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 18 May 2011 and for the information which you provided during the inspection. I was grateful for the time you gave to meeting with me on the afternoon before the inspection. Please pass on my thanks to pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and the local authority colleagues with whom I met during the day.

Since the previous inspection there have been staff changes in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, with established staff teaching different age groups. A new curriculum leader for science has been appointed.

As a result of the inspection on 3 and 4 November 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 is making satisfactory progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the pupils' achievement.

Since the last inspection new assessment systems for tracking pupils' progress have been established. Pupil progress meetings hold staff to account for attainment in each class. Consequently, teachers are generally raising expectations of what pupils should be attaining in mathematics. School data are beginning to show improvements in the attainment and progress of pupils. The regular reviews of pupils' learning in mathematics show that the progress for some individuals has accelerated. As yet this is not consistent for all year groups. School data show that,

whilst the current Year 6 pupils may not all achieve their targets in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2, they are expected to be broadly in line with national averages. However, from pupils' starting points, there is an improving picture because their mathematical skills are now being built on step by step. Predictions for the current Year 5 at the end of Key Stage 2 further reflect how the gap is beginning to close between the achievement of pupils and national expectations.

The structures now in place for tracking pupils' progress identify individuals and potentially vulnerable pupils not making the expected progress. Interventions for pupils have generally been effective and pupils talk confidently about what they have learnt. Older pupils can describe the properties of angles using mathematical vocabulary in the correct context. Occasionally, interventions are less effective because tasks planned are not sufficiently challenging to help pupils' develop their mathematical skills.

The school has focused on developing the quality of teaching of mathematics and staff subject knowledge. In mathematics lessons teachers and support staff generally involve pupils more actively in their learning so that pupils understand the task and next steps. In a Year 2 class the teaching assistant worked effectively with pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities during the whole-class session on counting back. Pupils had the opportunity to use practical counting equipment, alongside careful explanations from the teaching assistant.

The quality of teaching remains variable. In the good lessons learning moves along at a brisk pace. Teachers use assessment opportunities to help pupils overcome misconceptions. Information and communication technology is well used to support learning in mathematics. For example, Year 5 pupils were challenged to measure angles accurately by using an interactive protractor on the whiteboard. Adults encourage pupils to discuss their work with a partner, so helping them to apply their knowledge. Older pupils could explain how finding the area of a room is important when buying a new carpet. Teachers' questioning further encourages pupils to explain how they calculated their answers. In the less effective lessons progress is slow because work is not appropriately matched to pupils' needs. The pace of the lesson is sometimes lost because lessons are less active, such as in science.

The recent introduction of target cards has been well received by older pupils and develops their understanding of next steps in their learning. During the monitoring visit a group of Year 5 pupils talked about how teachers' marking helps them know how well they are doing. Pupils appreciate the opportunity to respond to teachers' comments in their mathematics books, because this challenges them to improve their work.

The strong leadership and management from the headteacher and relatively new senior leadership team have underpinned the improvements. Leadership has focused on putting systems and structures in place to support its work, such as monitoring attendance and working more effectively with parents, carers and pupils. As a result,

attendance is now in line with the national average. Effective monitoring and evaluation have a clear focus on outcomes for pupils. Therefore school leaders, including members of the governing body, know the key strengths and weaknesses and take appropriate action to drive improvement. A good example has been the investment in training and development of mathematics teaching which is beginning to bring about improvements. Developments in the teaching and learning of science, however, are still in the early stages.

The statement of action produced by the local authority following the last inspection meets requirements. The action plan is appropriate and the school leaders have an accurate understanding of the progress being made through the regular evaluations. The school has benefited from the support by a local authority mathematics adviser to drive improvements in the teaching of mathematics.

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

Jane Neech

Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in November 2010

- Raise attainment and accelerate the learning and progress of all pupils, particularly in mathematics and science by:
 - ensuring pupils' skills are built on step by step, practised regularly and applied in different and relevant context
 - developing teachers' skills and confidence in the teaching of mathematics.
- Improve the quality of teaching by:
 - involving the pupils more actively in their learning and ensuring they understand the progress they are making through regular feedback
 - ensuring that pupils are involved in setting targets for improving their work
 - improve the pace of learning in lessons
 - using assessment and information about how well pupils are doing to set work which challenges individual pupils at their own level.
- Improve attendance by:
 - working more closely with parents and carers
 - ensuring pupils understand the importance of regular attendance.