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19 May 2011

Mrs K Dukes
Partnership Headteacher
Neatishead Church of England Primary School
School Road
Neatishead
NR12 8XN

Dear Mrs Dukes

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Neatishead Church of England Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 18 May 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please pass my thanks to the members of the governing body for the time they gave and also to the staff and pupils.

Since the last inspection, there have been considerable changes in the staffing and leadership and management of the school. The acting headteacher at the time of the inspection left at the end of that term. A new acting headteacher took over for the summer term. You agreed to take up the partnership headship initially for one year from September 2010. The partnership has recently been formally extended for a further year and the governing bodies of both schools are keen to maintain this arrangement indefinitely.

As a result of the inspection on 10 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:

inadequate progress in making improvements

and

satisfactory progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.



Since the last inspection, national data for pupils at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 has been published. This shows an improvement from previous years at the end of Key Stage 2 for all pupils in both their attainment in English and mathematics and the progress they make in these subjects, which was close to the national average. The school's own data indicates that attainment is likely to remain close to average and that progress is satisfactory. National data for Year 2 in 2010 shows a significant decline in attainment from the previous year in reading and writing, with attainment significantly below national expectations. The school's current data indicates a similar picture in 2011. This situation was investigated in detail during the inspection and it was found that, due to the considerable turbulence the school has experienced in its leadership, the key issue regarding improving the quality and consistency of teaching, marking and assessment has not been addressed in Key Stage 1. For example, pupils do not know or understand their learning targets and are unclear, when asked during lessons, what it is they are expected to learn. Work is not matched to pupils' learning needs. As a result, some pupils lose interest and their behaviour deteriorates. Work in pupils' books is untidy and pupils appear to take little pride in their work.

The picture in Key Stage 2 is better, with some evidence of learning objectives being made clear to pupils and some marking giving guidance on what pupils need to focus on next to improve their work. However, this guidance is not detailed enough to support, for example, better progress in writing. Some pupils are unclear about their learning targets and it is rare for pupils to be given time to improve work during lessons. Pupils in Year 6 are unclear about what National Curriculum level they are working on, which limits their aspirations and ambition to learn as well as they possibly can.

There is little evidence that the outdoor area is being used well for the Early Years Foundation Stage. For example, during the lesson observed, children were free to wander in and out but had very little clear direction about what was expected of them when they engaged in an activity outside the classroom.

Since the partnership headteacher took up her post, the school has stabilised. She has a crystal clear agenda for making improvements but she has had very little support from the local authority because they did not realise how much support the school needed. The partnership headteacher was only expecting to be at the school for one year so did not accelerate change to the extent that has become very clear is necessary to ensure all pupils achieve the best they possibly can. The governing body has worked hard to improve and now have a robust system for monitoring the work of the school. They continue to give satisfactory support and their capacity to challenge has improved since the last inspection. However, they have not yet received training on how to identify good teaching and learning, although this is planned as a joint training session for both schools' governing bodies. Because the partnership is set to continue for another year and the governing bodies of both

schools are committed to working together indefinitely, the school is able to demonstrate satisfactory progress in achieving a better capacity for sustained improvement.

The inspection has raised very serious concerns. These will be considered by the appropriate Regional Director, Inspection Delivery, who will decide when the school will next be inspected.

Since the partnership arrangement there has been satisfactory support from staff at the partnership school and from local authority advisers bought in to support developments in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1. However, the impact of this support is not yet evident.

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

Julie Winyard
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching, marking and assessment to accelerate pupils' progress by:
 - planning lessons that more closely match the next steps in pupils' learning, especially for the more able
 - ensuring pupils understand clearly from marking how a piece of work can be improved in literacy and numeracy
 - identifying succinct targets for pupils to help them move forward.

- Improve learning opportunities in the outdoor learning area in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

- Ensure that leaders and managers at all levels focus sharply on monitoring, including of teaching, to consolidate improvements and contribute fully in determining the school's strategic direction.