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## PROTECT-INSPECTION

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10 December 2012

Mrs Karen Dukes  
Neatishead Church of England Primary School  
School Road  
Neatishead  
Norwich  
NR12 8XN

Dear Mrs Dukes

### **Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Neatishead Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 7 December 2012, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on the findings of my visit. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher and the chair of governors. The inspector spent time in both classes, paying particular attention to standards of written work. The school improvement plan was evaluated together with action plans, details of the school's lesson observation system, and minutes of governors meetings.

### **Context**

The school's headteacher jointly leads this school with a nearby school judged 'good' at the last inspection. Steps are being taken to enable both schools to work much closer together and benefit from each other's strengths in a federation with a single governing body. Both substantive teachers are new in post and both are experienced.

## Main findings

Since the last inspection a school improvement board has been formed consisting of representative from the diocese, the local authority, and the governing body. This is beginning to oversee the changes made to the school's improvement plan made as a result of the issues identified at the last inspection. Governors are not yet monitoring progress towards the performance targets set by this body however.

Teaching has improved markedly. The new teachers deal with the complexities of mixed-year groups well. Lessons are carefully tailored to meet the needs of all. Support is given to the younger pupils and lessons are pitched to effectively stimulate the learning of others. As a result, standards in literacy and mathematics are beginning to rise, especially in reading and writing. In years 5 and 6 the pace of learning in mathematics is accelerating. Pupils are learning well the skills of independent and group working. They are not slow to ask challenging questions or extend their learning to unfamiliar topics.

Central to the improvements in teaching and learning has been recent improvements in the use of assessment. This is now accurate and systematic in the lower class and is being introduced rapidly in the upper class. This means that teachers have an accurate view of the attainment and progress being made by each pupil and can structure lessons accordingly. They do this to good effect. The marking of written work has improved. Mistakes are now corrected and clear advice given on how to improve.

The school's action plans are clear and challenging. In particular, they contain very clear targets for the improvement of aspects of learning. For example to ensure that 'problem solving and reasoning is a part of every maths topic taught'. The aims are accompanied by detailed action plans with clear accountability and timescales defined. The school's lesson observation system is accurate and gives a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of teaching. However it misses opportunities to evaluate learning that occurs as a result. Teachers from each of the partnership schools now regularly observe each other and exchange best practice.

The governing body is currently undergoing significant changes as part of the formation of a two-school federation. Currently, governors do not challenge the school sufficiently well. They are too dependent on information and analyses provided by the headteacher. As a consequence they do not have an independent view of the progress that the school is making towards its own targets.

Senior leaders and governors have begun to take effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. Following the visit to the school, HMI recommends that further action is taken to:

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- Ensure that the new governing body is sufficiently familiar with school performance measures to make independent challenge of the school and its progress towards performance targets.
- Ensure that the school's lesson observations pay sufficient attention to the learning that occurs in lessons rather than the teacher's activities.

### **External support**

The school has used local authority to give advice in areas of numeracy and intervention support. In addition the diocese has provided advice and guidance on discipline and behavior. A local leader of education has supported the headteacher in the development of the school, including teaching and learning. An external consultant has been employed to give an overview of the school.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Norfolk and as below.

Yours sincerely

Ian Seath  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**