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Ania Vaughan
Headteacher
Christ Church CofE (VA) Primary School and Nursery
New Road
Ware
SG12 7BT

Dear Mrs Vaughan

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Christ Church CofE (VA) Primary School and Nursery, Ware

Following my visit to your school on 26 March 2013, 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 deputy, the subject leader for mathematics, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority. The school improvement plan was evaluated. In addition, senior staff accompanied HMI on a tour of the school when classes were learning mathematics.

Context

There have been no significant changes in the school's context since the last inspection.

Main findings

The improvement plan identifies clearly what the school will do to address the main priorities identified in the November inspection. Many of the milestones are short

term; the next phase of improvement planning rightly identifies more phased implementation and progress checks. Governors are closely involved, particularly through their link roles to the senior leadership team and to mathematics. They are clear about their monitoring role and how to evaluate pupils' attainment and progress, following data training. Regular 'governor mornings' when they join lessons, and pupil progress meetings when they work with the school to analyse assessment data and pupils' work, are making staff more accountable.

The school is working collaboratively to improve provision in mathematics. Staff are more confident about the accuracy of their assessments of pupils as a result of moderation between teachers and support by a local authority mathematics adviser. Attention has been given to transition into Year 1 and between Years 6 and 7, by working with other schools in the area.

Professional development is being used appropriately. For example, following an external course focused on feedback and marking in mathematics the subject leader led a session in school for staff and governors. The new marking policy and recent examples of pupils' marked work indicate that these strategies are having an impact. Parents and carers have been clearly informed about the school's new approaches so they are able to support their child's learning.

New resources and schemes of work are helping to promote enjoyment in learning about mathematics. A new mathematics club, run by the subject leader with the support of pupils who are mathematics mentors, is contributing too. Although mathematics taught in the context of other subjects is at an early stage of development the school's monitoring shows that teachers are approaching mathematics lessons more confidently and creatively than previously. The school is evaluating the contribution of teaching assistants.

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 recommend that further action is taken to:

- monitor the impact of actions on the progress of different groups of pupils, including pupils' contribution to learning
- show how the school plans to improve use of the outdoor area in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and monitor the impact
- widen the range of evidence used to make judgements about the quality of teaching.

Ofsted will continue to monitor the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

The school has received support from the local authority through help adjusting the improvement plan, advice about good practice in the area and a series of visits by a

specialist mathematics adviser. A programme of observations is planned involving senior staff and the local authority improvement partner, followed by a review of progress since the Section 5 inspection.

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

Yours sincerely

Ian Middleton
Her Majesty's Inspector