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Mrs Caroline Holcombe  
The Acting Headteacher  
Miserden Church of England Primary School  
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Dear Mrs Holcombe

### Ofsted monitoring of schools with a notice to improve

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 31 March 2009, for the time you gave to our phone discussions, and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. Please convey my thanks to the staff, pupils, parents, governors, the consultant headteacher and the local authority officers who talked to me about the school's work.

Since the previous inspection there have been changes in staff. The substantive headteacher has been on sick leave since September 2008. An acting headteacher is in post and there are three new teaching assistants. The senior teacher retired in December 2008 and a newly qualified teacher has been temporarily appointed to cover her class. Two additional governors have been appointed to the governing body.

As a result of the inspection on 18 June 2008, the school was asked to: raise expectations and effectively monitor the work of the school by making better use of information gained to improve provision and raise standards; build the parents' trust and confidence in the school's leadership; ensure all statutory requirements are fully met, including the recording for staff recruitment; and, improve the quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6.

This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website. Please inform the Regional Inspection Service Provider of any factual inaccuracies within 24 hours of the receipt of 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.

The acting headteacher has implemented an appropriate system to track the progress of pupils in all year groups systematically. Staff now analyse performance

data more effectively to set targets for pupils. Internal records of the pupils' progress, including pupils' work, indicate that standards are rising particularly in Years 3 to 6. The school is on course to improve upon its results in the national tests in 2008, particularly in mathematics and, most importantly, at the higher levels. In the 2008, in mathematics, only half the pupils achieved the national average standard and no pupil achieved the higher Level 5 score.

Nonetheless, staff and governors are still at an embryonic stage in interpreting data to monitor the progress of all groups of pupils regularly and rigorously to ensure targets set, particularly for more able pupils, are sufficiently challenging. The current tracking systems do not yet chart the achievement of pupils sufficiently enough across all year groups to show their progress over time. The acting headteacher has good plans in place to improve the collation of performance data and appropriate training is planned for staff and governors.

Lesson observations conducted with the acting headteacher and the consultant headteacher confirmed the accuracy of their views of the improved quality of teaching and learning, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Teaching is now at least satisfactory and some aspects are good. A positive working atmosphere is underpinned by good relationships and behaviour. Detailed lesson planning demonstrates that teachers are aware of pupils' general levels of ability and most tasks are suitably differentiated. That said, more able pupils are not always challenged sufficiently and there are not enough opportunities for pupils to learn independently and collaborate in small groups. Satisfactory improvements have been made to assessment and marking practices, but more needs to be done to include pupils in the assessment of their work and that of their peers. Not all pupils know their targets for improvement. The school has done much to improve the quality of the learning environment and classrooms are well organised.

Without exception, all parents spoken to expressed confidence in the acting headteacher. They reported that since her arrival communication has improved significantly and the atmosphere in the school is more welcoming. They appreciate the notice board, the weekly newsletters, the attractive displays and the monthly parent/governor forums. Both parents and pupils were unanimous in their praise for the improvements made in such a short space of time including the introduction of pupil targets, regular school council meetings, more training opportunities for staff and the increased number of after school clubs.

The acting headteacher knows what is required to accelerate progress and bring about the required improvement. Much has been achieved since her appointment and appropriate systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the school's work systematically. However, subject leaders are not as yet sufficiently involved in this aspect of the school's self-evaluation. Staff have embraced the improvement agenda enthusiastically. They are not complacent and want the school to improve. Governors have worked tirelessly to develop their roles and responsibilities and ensure statutory requirements are met, particularly in relation to staff recruitment. They now are focused clearly upon holding the school to account and have made a

satisfactory start in developing their monitoring role. Both staff and governors have attended relevant training and are receiving good levels of support from the local authority. The local authority's statement of action meets requirements and contains appropriate strategies, particularly in relation to governance, to support the school to improve.

Whilst the school is making satisfactory progress in tackling the areas for improvement, continuing uncertainty about the long term leadership of the school is acting as a barrier to the swifter progress required to increase the school's overall effectiveness.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Mary Harlow  
Her Majesty's Inspector