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11 February 2011

Mr Jeremy Pentreath  
Headteacher  
The Oaks Community Primary School  
Aster Road  
Ipswich  
IP2 0NR

Dear Mr Pentreath

### **Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of The Oaks Community Primary School**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 10 February 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. I also wish to thank the parents and carers with whom I spoke to by telephone, pupils, the Chair of Governing Body and the School Improvement Partner for sharing their views about the school.

Since the last inspection, there have been a number of changes in the school. The senior management team has been restructured, the number of pupils on roll has increased to 355 and four new governors have been appointed.

As a result of the inspection on 14 October 2009, 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 good progress in making improvements and good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

There is good improvement in pupils' achievement since the last inspection, which is now good rather than satisfactory because standards are steadily rising and attainment is now broadly average by the time pupils leave the school. In 2010, national performance data showed a steady rise in standards to broadly average for all subjects at both key stages and slightly below average in mathematics from low standards in subjects overall in 2009. The results achieved in 2010 were the best the school has ever reached in its history. Pupils make good progress as a result of good learning and teaching in lessons because assessment is used more effectively in setting clearly differentiated outcomes matched to ability, to match work or adapt

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particular resources more closely to pupils' needs. This was seen in a Year 2 mathematics lesson, where higher attaining pupils were solving mathematical word problems using addition in tens and units while lower attaining pupils were writing three different addition numerical problems to arrive at the answer ten. In a Year 6 English lesson, a pupil at a very early stage of learning English as an additional language was given simplified instructions using visual cues in order to access understanding of the how to make a Chinese lantern, which he completed as effectively as his peers, while higher attaining pupils were working independently and extending their learning. Pupils with special education needs who receive additional support make good and sometimes outstanding progress. Since the last inspection, the school has introduced an effective approach to reading recovery resulting in clear gains of at least a full National Curriculum level in one year from very low levels on entry.

Teachers are making better use of assessment in marking to bring about improvement so that pupils have a clear idea how to improve their work and are given time to complete this. This was seen in pupils' written work in all year groups. As a result, pupils are continually trying to improve their learning. In lessons seen there were good opportunities, than at the time of the previous inspection, for pupils of all abilities to learn independently which were balanced with group work. Many examples of pupils' writing across subjects and for a range of purposes were seen throughout the school. This represents significant improvement since the last inspection and has already had a marked impact in significantly raising the proportion of those achieving national standards in 2010 against 2009.

The school is successfully building its capacity to improve and progress in this area is good. The newly restructured senior leadership team shares responsibility for the core subjects and key areas of teaching assessment and the curriculum. Together with the new phase leaders, the middle managers, they hold progress meeting reviews on a half-termly basis to look at the standards pupils are achieving and the progress they are making. They analyse assessment data to see where progress is being made and identify any shortfalls, putting in place effective strategies to remedy these. As a result standards are steadily rising, the quality of teaching and learning has improved and all pupils are making better progress since the last inspection. This was also reflected parents' and carers' views and in the comments of pupils, whose good behaviour seen in lessons contributes significantly to their learning. Improved partnerships with parents and links with other schools and the community are having a positive impact on learning and pupils' well-being and demonstrate further capacity to improve.

The local authority has provided satisfactory support overall with particularly strong support from the School Improvement Partner and advisory teachers who have worked closely with senior leaders and with teachers to drive up standards.

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

Declan McCarthy  
**Additional Inspector**

## Annex

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in October 2009.**

- Further raise standards in English and mathematics by:
  - refining the use of assessment in lessons by identifying precise outcomes tailored to the needs of different groups of pupils
  - ensuring that pupils carry out improvements in response to teachers' marking feedback
  - creating opportunities for pupils to write independently and at length across the curriculum.