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Thursday 4 November 2010

Miss Riley  
Priory Primary School  
Limes Road  
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Dudley  
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Dear Miss Riley

### **Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Priory Primary School**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when my colleague and I inspected your school on Wednesday 3 November 2010, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please also pass on our thanks to the members of staff and to the pupils who spoke with the inspection team.

Since the last inspection, three teachers have left the school and four newly qualified teachers have joined. A new Chair of Governors has been appointed. The headteacher retired at the end of last term. This term the deputy headteacher is acting headteacher and two assistant headteachers are sharing the role of acting deputy headteacher. The governing body has plans to appoint a substantive headteacher to take up post by Easter 2011.

As a result of the inspection on 3 November 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 satisfactory progress in making improvements and satisfactory progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Since the last inspection, there are signs of improvement in pupils' achievement. Although the school did not carry out the 2010 end of Key Stage 2 national tests, teacher assessments show that pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2010 was higher than in 2009 and a larger proportion of pupils attained the higher grade in English and mathematics. Pupils' attainment in writing in 2010 at the end of Key Stage 1 was also higher than in 2009. However, the school's data and other evidence gained during the inspection show that pupils' attainment in all year groups remains low.



Pupils' progress and their learning in lessons have also improved. This is because the many new initiatives to improve the quality of pupils' learning are beginning to have a positive impact. Work undertaken to improve pupils' knowledge of letters and sounds is beginning to help pupils' improve their literacy skills, especially in Key Stage 1. However, the school's monitoring information shows that the rate at which pupils make progress is still inconsistent across the school.

New systems for collecting information and tracking the progress of most groups of pupils in all year groups have been introduced. As a result, the analysis of data is more rigorous and leaders are using this to challenge teachers about pupils' progress and raise their expectations. The analysis also gives leaders a clearer picture of where teaching is less effective. In partnership with the local authority, the school is providing support and training which is successfully promoting better quality teaching, especially in writing and phonics.

Leaders are now using the analysis of pupils' progress data to ensure that additional interventions are more effectively directed. For example, phonics skills are now effectively taught in discrete ability groups and activities well-matched to the needs of the pupils in these groups. Teachers now have a better understanding of data and the outcomes of analysis presented to them by senior leaders. However, they are not all using this information well enough to match work to the needs of all groups of pupils and to plan pupils' next small steps of learning. Teachers do not check pupils' understanding often enough during lessons to make sure any misunderstandings are corrected or to modify activities for those who are finding the learning too easy or too hard.

School leaders and staff value the support they have received from the local authority. Their support in improving skills in teaching writing has resulted in raised attainment in Key Stage 1 and pockets of improvement in Key Stage 2. Pupils now get more opportunities to write in a range of genres although there not enough opportunities to write at length.

Improvements to strategic planning and self-evaluation are very recent. As a result of the new leadership and management structure, participation in strategic planning and school self-evaluation has widened to include all leaders and managers. A systematic programme of monitoring activities has been put in place and leaders have received training to fulfil their roles. Self-evaluation and improvement planning documentation is detailed but still lacks sufficient focus on pupils' outcomes.

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

Joanne Harvey **Her Majesty's Inspector**

September 2010

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

## Annex

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

- Rigorously analyse data on the progress of individuals and groups of pupils in all year groups, and use the outcomes to improve teaching by ensuring that planned work is consistently well matched to pupils' individual needs.
- Raise standards in English by providing more training opportunities so that staff can more effectively plan and teach the key concepts and skills which underpin effective writing and phonics, particularly in Key Stage 1.
- Improve strategic planning and self-evaluation, ensuring all members of the senior team follow up rigorously the findings from monitoring activities.