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Mrs Jackie Sankey
Headteacher
Harestock Primary School
Bramshaw Close
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Winchester
SO22 6LU

Dear Mrs Sankey

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Harestock Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 9 February 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please also extend my thanks to the staff and pupils who gave of their time to speak with me about the work of the school.

There have been a number of changes since the school was last inspected. Some staff have left, and the school has appointed two additional teachers. As of September 2010, the school has an assistant headteacher in post; the deputy headteacher has also had additional time out of class to support the headteacher with leadership and management of the school. Some of the existing staff have also had their roles and responsibilities altered. The governing body has gained two new parent governors.

As a result of the inspection on 10 and 11 November 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 progress the school has made against these areas of improvement is broadly satisfactory. Although fairly recent, the school has also made satisfactory progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

The progress in raising the achievement of pupils stalled for a while following the section 5 inspection. This was due in part to staffing issues and to the school having limited capacity to improve. As a result, in 2010 levels of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 fell in reading, writing and mathematics. Levels of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 dipped in English to below average in 2010. As a result of stronger



and more focused leadership and management in the school, levels of attainment have started to rise once again, although more rapidly in English than in mathematics. There is no longer any inadequate teaching in the school and teaching is satisfactory overall. In the lessons observed all pupils made at least satisfactory progress with their learning. This is because teachers are making better use of assessment information to plan work that is more closely matched to pupils' needs. However, more-able pupils are not always challenged as well as they could be. Focused support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is leading to these pupils making satisfactory and at times good progress in their learning.

There are good relationships between adults and pupils. Teachers make adequate use of targets to help pupils know how to improve, but at times these are not sufficiently challenging, particularly in English. Teaching provides pupils with time to discuss and think about their work. This is helping pupils to become articulate and reflective. Although pupils' work is generally well marked, the use of assessment strategies during lessons is not sufficiently well embedded. Consequently, learning sometimes progresses at an overly leisurely pace. In these lessons, teachers are not sufficiently aware of the rate of progress and learning taking place. There are still too many missed opportunities to reinforce basic skills. For example, pupils are not encouraged enough to use and apply their knowledge of letters and sounds to help them to read and write new and unfamiliar words. This slows their progress, particularly in Key Stage 1. Higher order reading skills are not always reinforced well enough at key Stage 2. Pupils do not make sufficient use of new technologies to support their learning. While some teachers make effective use of the whiteboard to engage and motivate pupils as well as to demonstrate new learning, all too often this resource is not used interactively enough.

Pupils continue to be well behaved in lessons and around the school. Rates of attendance remain high, reflecting the good work of the school in this area and pupils' enjoyment of coming to school.

The leadership team have worked diligently to review and reorganise the curriculum. As a result, programmes of work now promote greater progression of learning and are more appropriately focused on the development of skills. There is a curriculum map which identifies pertinent links between subjects under themes. However, the school has yet to ensure the curriculum also reinforces what pupils are learning about the rich variety of cultures found within Britain. Pupils state that learning has become more interesting, especially when their work is linked to what they learn in other subjects. A good example was seen in Year 2, with pupils developing their writing skills while drafting stories about alien adventures. This was linked to their work in science about space.

The headteacher has developed good systems for presenting and analysing assessment information about pupils. Teachers and senior leaders are making good use of this information to recognise and target underperformance. They are also



using it well to evaluate the successes of new initiatives, such as intervention strategies for pupils in mathematics. However, subject managers are not all making enough use of data to help raise standards, for example by setting challenging targets for different groups of pupils. Furthermore, their evaluations of activities do not include sufficient reference to progress or levels of attainment. The school has improved systems for evaluating the impact of its actions in promoting community cohesion. This has led to more resources to help pupils learn about the similarities and differences between cultures locally, nationally and globally.

Governors are becoming more supportive of the school. Their effectiveness is improving and they are asking more questions about the progress being made by groups of pupils. The school also continues to ensure that the health and safety of pupils are a high priority and safeguarding procedures are fully in place.

The quality and impact of external support is satisfactory overall. There has been some good support for English and special educational needs. This is leading to the improvements made in these areas. The effective support from an advisory headteacher has also led to more rigorous whole school self-evaluation. External support has been best when provided as a cohesive and well-managed package for the school.

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

Gehane Gordelier
Her Majesty's Inspector



Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in November 2009.

- Review the organisation of the curriculum to:
 - ensure that it helps pupils to see the interrelations between subjects
 - support better provision within the curriculum for raising pupils' awareness of the rich variety of cultures to be found within Britain.

- Improve the systems for presenting and analysing the assessment information on pupils to:
 - allow managers and leaders at all levels to have better access to the information in order to have a more strategic overview of school performance that allows them to challenge areas where performance is comparatively weaker and evaluate the success of new initiatives
 - allow more rigorous use of assessment information to plan work that is more closely matched to each pupil's needs, especially for more-able pupils, so that all are challenged to achieve as well as possible.

- Improve the systems for evaluating the impact of the school's actions to promote community cohesion.