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Ms Verelda Powell  
Headteacher  
Coley Primary School  
Wolseley Street  
Reading  
Berkshire  
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Dear Ms Powell

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

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 17 February 2011, for the time you gave to our telephone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please also pass on my thanks to the pupils and the governors who spent time talking with me.

Since the last inspection the school has been through a period of considerable change. Three new teachers have been appointed and a new senior leadership team has been established. Management responsibilities have been clarified and redistributed. In addition, existing classrooms have been remodelled and decorated to enable teachers to develop a wider range of learning activities. A new purpose-built nursery is due to be completed by the start of the autumn term.

As a result of the inspection on 15 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 satisfactory progress in making improvements and good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Following the last inspection, the school set about addressing the significantly below average attainment by the end of Year 6. The reasons for this underachievement were largely linked to the complex needs of the pupils, turbulence in staffing, inadequate systems for monitoring pupils' progress and continuing pockets of inadequate teaching.



As a consequence, the school took effective and rigorous action to rebuild the school's capacity to drive and sustain improvement. Good and determined leadership enabled effective changes to be made to the way the school is managed. The senior leadership team and governors now share the school's vision for improvement. Subject and middle leaders' roles, responsibilities and accountabilities are very clear and teachers are held accountable for the progress made by the pupils in their classes. The outcomes of monitoring and evaluation are now used increasingly well by leaders at all levels to identify and address any gaps in learning.

Actions to establish a common strategy for calculation and mental mathematics have been determined and effective. A detailed scheme has been introduced across all phases and modified for different year groups. This is laying a firm foundation for sustained improvement in calculation and problem solving. Furthermore, a strategy focusing on phonics has been introduced alongside activities to increase vocabulary. As a result, progress in reading is accelerating rapidly although it is not yet quite as rapid in writing.

These changes are embedded well and the impact can be seen in the accelerating rates of progress for all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils who speak English as an additional language. For example, attainment in the current Year 6 has risen strongly compared with the previous two years and is on track to be broadly average overall by the end of the year. School data show a significant increase in the number of pupils on track to reach the higher level in both English and mathematics. This represents good progress for these pupils since the beginning of the year and confirms that the school has built good capacity for sustaining and driving improvements.

Further evidence to support the school's good capacity can be seen in the progress made by other groups. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are, for example, making good progress from their lower than expected starting points. Current indications are that the number of children reaching age-related expectations will rise again this year. Although proud of their recent achievements staff are not complacent. They are aware that more remains to be done and are determined to raise attainment further.

Class teachers are increasingly skilful at ensuring work is well matched to the needs of different groups and individuals. As a result, pupils are making accelerated progress to make up lost ground. Joint observations of teaching confirm that the proportion of good or better lessons is rising rapidly although some inconsistencies remain. Senior leaders' rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning, in partnership with middle leaders, has been used well to identify some aptly focused areas for further improvement.

Local authority advisers, external consultants and a successful partnership with a nearby school have provided good support for school development. There is now a shared vision for improvement and an ambition to succeed. Attainment and



achievement are rising rapidly because the school is setting challenging targets and achieving them, although more remains to be done. The school is well placed to continue to improve.

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

John Earish

**Additional Inspector**

## Annex

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

- Improve attainment and accelerate progress by:
  - ensuring that there is a common strategy for calculation and mental mathematics to enable pupils to build successfully on previous learning
  - increasing the focus on phonics and strategies that will help pupils increase their vocabulary and improve their reading
  - improving teaching by ensuring that assessment is consistently accurate and addresses any gaps in learning.
  
- Develop the role of middle leaders by increasing the opportunities to monitor and evaluate the implementation of initiatives.

