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Mrs R Hughes
Headteacher
Parton Manor Infant School
Craven Drive
Churchdown
Gloucestershire
GL3 2AG

Dear Mrs Hughes

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Parton Manor Infant School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 20 October 2010, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please pass on my thanks to staff and pupils for their help. In particular, I would like to thank the Chair of the Governing Body for coming into school to meet with me.

Since the inspection, there has been a substantial turnover in the membership of the governing body and the Chair of the Governing Body is new to the role.

As a result of the inspection on 29 April 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 satisfactory progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Since the inspection, attainment in the Year 2 national tests has improved and unvalidated results for 2010 indicate that attainment is broadly average. By tracking the progress made by each pupil in Years 1 and 2, teachers effectively identify those more able individuals who can work at a higher level. In addition, they provide a greater level of support for those who find learning a challenge. Nevertheless, there is an understanding among senior teachers that systems for recording and tracking pupil progress are cumbersome and they are seeking to use more efficient electronic systems.

Most notable is the improved picture in pupils' attainment in writing which was significantly below the national average in 2009. This improvement has been



achieved by placing a greater emphasis on developing writing skills through focused teaching and small-group support work. Teaching staff are confident that the boys performed better in reading, writing and mathematics because they planned interesting and practical activities. For instance, a whole-school topic on the Caribbean encouraged the boys to develop their key skills well in work based on pirates.

Recent assessment information from the Early Years Foundation Stage indicates that children make good progress from a starting point that is below age-related expectations. They achieve levels of attainment that are in line with national averages. Clear assessment systems provide an accurate picture of individual achievement. By identifying specific groups of children, such as those born during the summer months and those from minority ethnic groups, individuals receive additional support where necessary. For example, pupils who had been identified as requiring additional help in linking letters and sounds to their written work were supported in a group activity.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and emphasise how much they like playing with their friends. They are confident about approaching adults in school or their peer play leaders when they have a worry or concern. Pupils enthusiastically explain that fruit, vegetables and dairy products are sensible foods to eat, despite bringing lunch boxes to school that are not always well balanced. The older pupils keenly take on responsibilities, such as cleaning plates at lunchtime and helping the younger children. Pupils are well looked after and relationships in school are very warm and caring. The effective way that the school makes use of specialist support from external agencies is exemplified through the close liaison with the Traveller Children's Service.

Pupils' response to learning is good, particularly when planned activities are practical. They understand how their targets help them with their learning and are confident that when their books are marked, they are told how to improve their work. Even when lessons lack pace and they are required to sit on the carpet for a long time, most are tolerant and polite. Missed opportunities to use computers as part of everyday learning remain a weakness in lessons and reflect the reluctance of teaching staff to engage with new technologies.

The satisfactory monitoring systems enable subject leaders to evaluate the effectiveness of key priorities. While analysis of the quality of teaching and learning in lessons and in pupils' books is noted, senior leaders do not always present this information in a way that reflects their accountability with a more evaluative approach. The Chair of the Governing Body has already put her recent training to

good effect. She is keen to engage with the school and has developed a focused approach to monitor the work of the school and measure its impact on pupil outcomes. The Chair has a good understanding of the need to improve the quality of information provided by senior leaders so that the governing body can fully support and challenge them.

The satisfactory support and challenge from the School Improvement Partner has raised the awareness of senior leaders. Most recently, the opportunity to form a partnership with another infant school has been well received and this indicates a willingness to move forward with greater momentum.

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

Lorna Brackstone
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- Ensure that teachers consistently demonstrate high expectations of all pupils and match work to the needs of all abilities in order to promote faster progress.
- Establish efficient whole-school systems for recording and tracking pupils' progress and use these effectively to set challenging targets in order to raise standards.
- Improve the assessment arrangements in the Early Years Foundation Stage to provide an accurate view of children's learning.
- Ensure monitoring is always rigorous and information gained is presented clearly and accurately to help inform the key priorities in the school improvement plan.