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Ms Jane Green
Village Primary School
115 Village Street
Derby
DE23 8DF

Dear Ms Green

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

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on Wednesday 9 February, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. Please pass on my thanks to the staff and Chair of Governors for their time and courtesy. I would like to particularly thank the pupils for the most enjoyable time I spent talking with them.

Since the school's last inspection there have been no significant contextual changes.

As a result of the inspection on 27 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 school has made good progress in making improvements and good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Since the previous inspection progress has accelerated throughout the school. This year, school assessment information for pupils in Year 6 shows that attainment has improved. Standards are closer to national averages and have risen sharply in writing. This rise in attainment from the previous year is a direct result of the school's determination to improve pupils' basic skills. All pupils are making at least satisfactory, and often good, progress. Consequently, attainment is rising steadily. Boys are developing confidence in writing. They are responding well to more appropriate choices of texts and topics and talk enthusiastically about their writing experiences. Lessons observed jointly with senior leaders confirm that all pupils are continuing to make satisfactory progress, with many making good, accelerated progress.

Good progress has been made with improving consistency in the quality of teaching and learning. A range of professional development opportunities has been undertaken by all teachers to promote consistency in teaching and learning. As a result, there are now more good lessons and this has been a key factor in the improvement in pupils' attainment. Extremely positive relationships exist between staff and pupils and classrooms are effectively managed. Teachers plan lessons carefully and resources, including interactive whiteboards, are used well. There is excellent practice in planning opportunities for pupils to explain their understanding using precise, subject specific language. Teachers are beginning to ensure that the needs of all learners are met through more effective use of assessment to provide tasks that challenge pupils of all abilities. However, more able pupils do not always have activities which offer sufficient challenge for their ability. Lessons generally move at a brisk pace and pupils are given adequate time to apply the skills they are learning to independent tasks. Teaching assistants are used effectively and are an integral part of lessons, promoting learning for all as well as the groups they support. A new marking policy is currently being introduced across the school. Where marking is good, teachers celebrate pupils' accomplishments and give them clear, precise pointers for improvement. However, this is not yet consistent throughout the school. Consequently, marking does not contribute as much as it might to improving progress and raising attainment. Pupils' behaviour is good.

The headteacher's drive and ambition to provide the best possible learning experiences and promote high expectations has been the key to increasing levels of progress and the subsequent upturn in pupils' attainment. The same high degree of commitment and energy is shared by all senior leaders. School self-evaluation is effective and accurate. The monitoring of teaching and learning is rigorous and has led to important improvements being made, which are accelerating the progress pupils make through the school. This good improvement since the last inspection demonstrates that the school has a good capacity for sustained further improvement.

The active involvement of the governing body in many areas of the school's life gives them a secure understanding and knowledge of the school's performance. This, along with an increasing confidence at analysing and monitoring pupil attainment, is enabling them to hold the school more rigorously to account.

The local authority has provided good and effective support to the school. In particular, the impact of the work carried out by literacy and numeracy consultants is now evident in the classrooms and in pupils' progress.

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

Dorothy Bathgate
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science, and especially the standard of boys' writing in Key Stage 2, by:
 - providing more challenging teaching and more activities to encourage and motivate boys.
- Increase the proportion of good teaching, particularly at Key Stage 2, by:
 - increasing the pace of lessons and the level of difficulty of work given to pupils, so that more is expected of them
 - reducing over-long introductions and explanations to the whole class where there are pupils of widely differing abilities
 - using support staff to work more frequently with groups in the early stages of a lesson.
- Develop the marking of pupils' work so that pupils know what they need to do to improve and to meet their targets.