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1 December 2010

Mrs Gillian Talbot  
Headteacher  
Ince St Mary's CofE Primary School  
Derby Street  
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Dear Mrs Talbot

**Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Ince St Mary's CofE Primary School**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 30 November 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 your staff and pupils for the welcome they gave me and to your School Improvement Partner.

Since the February 2009 inspection a new member of staff has been appointed to the Reception class, the Reception teacher has moved to Year 1 and the deputy headteacher is no longer class based.

As a result of the inspection on 25 and 26 February 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.

The 2010 Key Stage 2 unvalidated results represent a substantial improvement from the school's low results for the previous four years. Attainment at Key Stage 2 is now above the national average in English and broadly average in mathematics. Attainment in writing has improved significantly and in 2010 the boys outperformed the girls. At Key Stage 1 reading, writing and mathematics have all improved to be broadly in line with the national average.

September 2010



The school's detailed tracking data suggest that the majority of pupils are now making at least the progress expected of them in their learning. The amount of progress pupils make, however, varies from class to class with pupils making most progress in Years 2 – 6. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make much better progress because of the careful attention paid to their learning needs. More work needs to be done to ensure all pupils make the progress of which they are capable, particularly in mathematics and at Key Stage 1. This is the current focus for improvement and staff development.

The school's focus on raising standards in reading has led to an improvement in pupils' progress in and enjoyment of reading across all three key stages. Particularly effective has been the emphasis, in conjunction with the local authority, on the development of communication, language and literacy skills in Key Stage 1. There has also been a sharper focus on shared and guided reading in Key Stage 2. Recently conducted reading tests have revealed that a number of pupils' reading ages remain below their actual age. The school is now focusing on involving parents and carers more in reading with their children.

The school's data indicate that standards in science at the end of Key Stage 2 are improving. Pupils' progress in this area is more closely tracked and monitored. Improvements have been made to the quality of teachers' planning in science to ensure pupils have more experience of science investigations. Subject leader monitoring has taken place. This has revealed a number of inconsistencies and the need to embed agreed policies and procedures across the school through more regular checks to reduce variations.

The acceleration in the amount of progress pupils make in their learning has resulted from the increased attention given to the accurate and consistent tracking of pupils' progress and the improved use of assessment information to pinpoint pupils' learning needs and provide appropriate teaching, interventions and support. Inspection evidence confirms that the quality of teaching is more consistent than it was at the last inspection. The teaching observed during the visit was mostly good, although some teaching is only satisfactory and a small proportion remains inadequate. The headteacher's assessment of the accuracy of teaching and learning during joint observations of three science lessons with the inspector was accurate.

The headteacher is working hard to lay solid foundations for school improvement. The enhanced involvement of all staff in leadership activities has improved morale and teamwork. School self-evaluation accurately identifies stronger and weaker aspects of practice. There is an appropriate understanding of what needs to change and the school's development plan focuses on key areas for improvement. Systematic monitoring of attainment and progress and staff development to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment has been given a high priority. The school is aware of the need to enhance the role of subject leaders further in

monitoring and evaluation. Three members of the governing body have been closely involved in monitoring the progress of the school along with the headteacher and local authority. This has enhanced the governing body's ability to hold the school to account. The governing body now fulfils its statutory responsibility to promote community cohesion; an audit and detailed equalities policy are in place. An appropriate action plan has been developed to promote community cohesion and the school has begun to evaluate the impact of its work in this area.

The local authority has provided a wide range of effective and well-targeted support and challenge. The support of local consultants and the School Improvement Partner has been much appreciated by the school. High quality staff development in a number of areas has motivated the majority of staff and raised their levels of skills and confidence. Continuing opportunities are available for staff to visit colleagues in neighbouring schools to observe, share and discuss their practice.

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

Angela Milner  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

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

- Widen the school's focus on raising standards in English to include improving pupils' progress in, and enjoyment of, reading across the three key stages.
- Raise standards and achievement in science.
- Improve the proportion of good and outstanding teaching.
- Satisfy the statutory responsibility to promote community cohesion.