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Mrs A Bell  
Marsden Primary School  
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Dear Mrs Bell

### **Ofsted 2010–11 survey inspection programme: assessing pupils' progress (APP)**

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 8 October 2010 to evaluate the impact of the APP initiative.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our national evaluation and reporting. Published reports are likely to list the names of the contributing institutions but individual institutions will not be identified in the main text without their consent.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included: scrutiny of documentation; observations of teaching and learning; analysis of pupils' work; and discussions with senior leaders, other staff and pupils.

The overall use of assessment to support learning is good.

#### **Impact on pupils' achievement and attainment**

- APP has contributed to improvements in pupils' achievement. Pupils achieve well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and vulnerable groups. Attainment is average in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6. This indicates that pupils are making good progress from their generally below average starting points. A third of pupils exceed expected levels in English and mathematics. Nearly half the pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities reach nationally expected levels by the end of Year 6.

#### **Impact on the quality of pupils' learning and progress**

- APP plays an important part in accelerating the rate of pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils make good progress because teachers help them to build successfully on their prior learning to apply new skills confidently in a wide range of subjects. Pupils are quick to say

when they need help or are ready to move on. They persist until they succeed when tackling challenging activities.

- The use of APP criteria has helped to personalise pupils' learning. As a result, pupils enjoy learning and are motivated to succeed. Boys, for example, do as well as girls and more able pupils forge ahead because they strive to meet personal challenges. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities flourish as a result of successful intervention, one-to-one tuition and individual learning programmes.

### **Impact on the quality of teaching and the use of assessment to support learning**

- The APP initiative is raising teachers' expectations. Teachers reference daily observations of pupils' learning to APP criteria. This helps them to plan lessons that incorporate the right level of challenge for individuals and groups of pupils. Interventions and extra support are used very effectively in Years 5 and 6. They are less timely and targeted in other years within Key Stage 2 where a small group of lower-attaining pupils have some gaps in their knowledge and skills.
- APP has contributed to strengths in marking. It is most effective with older pupils who are fully involved in assessing their own learning. As a result, these pupils know exactly how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Younger pupils help set their targets but are not closely involved in reviewing their learning.

### **Impact on the curriculum**

- APP has supported the school's development of a creative curriculum because the criteria give teachers the confidence to plan learning experiences that meet pupils' individual needs and, in particular, engage boys.

### **Areas for development, which we discussed, include:**

- reducing the need for catch-up classes in Year 6 by making sure that teachers intervene at an earlier stage to support pupils' learning
- involving pupils throughout Key Stage 2 in assessing their own learning.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop assessment practice in support of school improvement.

As explained previously, a copy of this letter will be published on the Ofsted website. It may be used to inform decisions about any future inspection. Except in the case of academies, a copy of this letter is also being sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

**Lesley Clark**  
**Additional Inspector**