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Mr Phil Aldis
Headteacher
Stratton Primary School
New Road
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Dear Mr Aldis

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

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 16 November 2010, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Thank you also to the staff, children and chair of governors for finding the time to talk to me.

In recent times the number on roll at the school has begun to increase. During the current year the local authority has signed the school off as no longer needing intensive support. The school's deputy headteacher has recently been seconded to work with the local authority and an existing member of staff currently works as the acting deputy headteacher.

As a result of the inspection on 3–4 December 2008, 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.



There has been good improvement in the attainment and progress of pupils since the school was last inspected. This has been as a direct result of the success of staff in moving forward with plans to raise attainment across the school. As staff actions and improved practice have become embedded, improved attainment has followed. This is increasingly evident across all year groups. As a result of good teaching, the legacy of underachievement has mainly disappeared in the younger age group classes and is steadily disappearing amongst the older age group classes.

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage class generally showing attainment that is below that expected for their age. Improved teaching is enabling them to make faster progress and the proportion of good teaching and learning in lessons is rising. Recent data show that they reached average levels of attainment at the end of their Reception Year in 2010 and are more securely ready to start Year 1.

Pupils' good progress continues on through Key Stage 1. In 2010, attainment levels were slightly above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. The overall progress of pupils from Year 2 to Year 6 is also accelerating as a result of staff improving the quality of lessons provided. During the visits, all lessons seen showed good and occasionally very good learning. Projections for the end-of-year national tests indicate that pupils are on track to attain higher-than-expected levels of attainment in reading and mathematics and average standards in writing. Current work seen indicates that these projections are realistic.

Writing attainment is taking longer to improve than standards in other subjects. Nonetheless, pupils' progress is clearly improving in this area. Clever choices of subject material, such as play-script writing about the Robin Hood story and preparation of materials for podcasts, ensures boys and girls and pupils of all ability levels are equally inspired and motivated to improve their writing skills.

A feature of the school's improvement has been the implementation of clear and precise systems for regularly assessing and tracking pupils' performance. The headteacher has very effectively deployed staff in monitoring roles to work with the assessment information. This means that subject coordinators have a full knowledge of pupils' attainment and progress in all classes. 'Pupil Progress Meetings', held between coordinators and class teachers, enable all teachers and senior leaders to precisely pinpoint pupils' progress. They have a very good knowledge of pupils' personal and academic progress. Sharper monitoring systems enable staff to get an accurate feel for the extent to which new teaching strategies are successful in accelerating pupils' progress.

Teachers are making increasingly good use of assessment information to plan activities. In the lessons seen, activities were carefully pitched for specific ability groups. Teachers are alert to seizing all potential for ensuring higher-attaining pupils are challenged. There was full participation of these individuals and the good levels

of interaction with them in the lessons seen. This indicates that improved performance by this group of pupils is well underway.

The headteacher has empowered staff to take full ownership of all action plans. He has the respect and confidence of everyone in the school community. As a result, there is a strong ethos of teamwork amongst all of those who work in the school. There is a stable staff team and a strong commitment to sustain improvement, securely built on the confidence of the success in recent improvement initiatives.

Pupils spoken say they very much enjoy school. They remark that subjects that they once found difficult or did not like have now become more enjoyable and they feel they progress well. Pupils are clear about the targets set for them and have a much better understanding about what they need to do to improve. Pupils have clear opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning, to explore and investigate ideas for themselves and to become independent learners. Daily activities, role-play areas in the classrooms and classroom discussions give them increased scope to work in this way.

The school has a very effective partnership with the local authority and external partners, which it has used well to support improvement. Nonetheless, the school now has a good level of capacity to sustain improvement initiatives independently.

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

Laurie Lewin

Additional inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in 3–4 December 2008

- Involve leaders and managers at all levels in monitoring and evaluating the school's performance.
- Ensure that effective use is made of assessment information so that pupils' progress accelerates and they reach higher standards.
- Ensure that work set allows pupils to take more responsibility for their learning and is sufficiently challenging for the more able.