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Mrs M Barber
Headteacher
Lydlynch Infant School
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Southampton
Hampshire
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Dear Mrs Barber

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Lydlynch Infant School

Thank you for the help which you, your staff and pupils gave when I inspected your school on 13 January 2010, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided during the inspection. Please give my thanks to the parents and carers who met with me.

As a result of the inspection on 14 October 2009, the school was asked to address the most important areas for improvement which are set out in the annex to this letter. Since the last inspection there has been a change in leadership. A new headteacher took up post in April 2010. Other staff changes include the internal temporary appointment of a deputy headteacher and the appointment of two new teachers. Parents and carers speak very positively about changes in the school, particularly their increased opportunities for involvement with the school and their children's learning and the approachability of the headteacher and staff.

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.

Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is broadly average. A smaller than average proportion of pupils reaches the highest level in writing. In 2010 there was



a small increase in pupils' attainment in writing and mathematics. Pupils enter the school with skills that are slightly below what would be expected. The progress pupils make is satisfactory overall but variable. The school's newly introduced and more accurate procedures to assess pupils' performance indicate that improvements in attainment can be sustained because teaching is now more responsive to pupils' needs.

The new headteacher, in post for just over two terms, has made an excellent start and has worked very effectively with the staff to introduce a more robust method to measure pupils' progress. The school is in a much better position to judge progress more accurately. Ongoing assessment is now more accurate and detailed. Teachers have been fully involved with the developments in assessment procedures and this is leading to:

- greater awareness of the progress that pupils are making
- lessons that are planned to reflect the range of pupils' abilities, including the more able
- setting more accurate and challenging targets for pupils.

New approaches to managing behaviour have been successful. Pupils' behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. It is sometimes outstanding. This means that the atmosphere for learning in classes is generally good. Given engaging tasks, pupils are ready and willing to learn. The school has been very successful in helping its most vulnerable pupils, some of whom have both emotional and behavioural needs. These pupils have made outstanding progress in their personal development and in improving their learning skills.

The school's curriculum has been reorganised and is now based on projects through which a wide range of skills are developed. The overall curriculum plans show how key skills will be developed, for example different styles of writing are successfully linked to projects. Pupils say they like the different half-term projects.

The headteacher has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and is able to accurately judge the quality of lessons. In the school's self-evaluation teaching was judged as satisfactory although the proportion of good lessons has increased since the last inspection. During this inspection a balance of good and satisfactory teaching was observed. Teachers are well prepared and lesson planning is detailed. Relationships are excellent. Common approaches are employed across all classes, for example pupils have the chance to talk about their work and explain their answers. Teachers do not always make the best use of time in lessons. Sometimes the balance of whole-class, group and independent work does not promote efficient learning for all groups of pupils. Teachers take time to explain to pupils what they should be learning in each lesson but the full impact of this to support ongoing assessment and pupils' self-assessment is still to be realised.



Middle managers now have clear roles and are fully aware of their responsibilities especially in checking how well pupils are doing. They reflect a whole-school ethos of wanting to improve. The local authority has provided effective support, advice and guidance on management, curriculum and teaching matters.

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

Daniel Towl
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- Raise standards in writing and mathematics by ensuring that more pupils attain higher levels.
- Increase the proportion of teaching that is good by:
 - ensuring that planning for lessons specifies what different groups of pupils are expected to learn
 - providing greater challenge for more-able pupils
 - maximising opportunities for pupils to apply basic skills across the curriculum
 - embedding the use of assessment strategies during lessons so that teachers check pupils' understanding and progress at regular intervals and pupils know what to do to improve their work.
- Develop the role of all middle managers so that they track the progress made by different groups of pupils across the curriculum and produce improvement plans that are sharply focused on raising standards.