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9 December 2010

Mr David Jones / Ms Laura Newcombe
Headteacher / Head of School
Parkland Primary School
Old Park Road
Thorpe Edge
Bradford
West Yorkshire
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Dear Mr Jones /Mrs Newcombe

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

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 8 December 2010, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please extend my thanks to the Chair of the Governing Body, staff and pupils who made themselves available at short notice.

The school is federated with another nearby primary school. A federation headteacher has overall strategic responsibility for both schools while a head of school oversees the day-to-day organisation of Parkland. The school did not participate in Key Stage 2 national tests in 2010. Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 was based on teacher assessments which were independently moderated.

As a result of the inspection on 17 and 18 June 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.

Pupils' attainment had been consistently below average by the end of Year 6 for many years. Pupils start school with skills that are well below those expected for their age. This still represented satisfactory achievement. An analysis of teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 shows that attainment has improved significantly. This is borne out by a scrutiny of pupils' work during lesson observations undertaken during the monitoring inspection. The proportion of pupils

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attaining national expectations in English and mathematics has risen consistently since 2008. The school's monitoring records show that all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are making much better progress than at the time of the previous inspection, and are well placed to continue the trend of improvement.

Pupils are making better progress because the quality of teaching has improved. In the past, teachers have missed opportunities for pupils to think and learn for themselves. This is no longer the case. A feature of lessons is the extent to which pupils are involved in their learning and the way in which teachers encourage pupils to discuss their work. This enables pupils to manipulate ideas, reflect and articulate their findings, often to their peers or the whole class. This process consolidates learning and enhances progress. Furthermore, because pupils are now engaged and enjoying their learning, their attitudes to work are better and this has also contributed to improved performance, particularly in Key Stage 2. Good systems are in place to monitor pupils' progress and intervention programmes are employed to address underachievement to good effect. The school recognises the need to refine teachers' assessment skills so that they are more adept at identifying barriers to learning during lessons and using this knowledge to amend their planning. The quality of marking throughout the school has improved considerably since the previous inspection. Detailed comments include praise for pupils' efforts, along with clear guidance on how they might improve their work. Pupils appreciate this feedback and take note of what they must focus on in the future.

The school has taken measures to raise pupils' awareness and understanding of the diversity of cultures in the areas close to the school, in the United Kingdom and further afield. Particular attention has been paid to helping pupils realise that they are an integral part of their school community where respect, understanding and a consideration of others are important and necessary values. Links with other schools with pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds have raised awareness that pupils at Parkland live in a multi-cultural society and that the values they are learning in school will be important for the rest of their lives. International links are in their infancy and the school has plans to develop this aspect of community cohesion in the future.

The school has benefitted from the federation involving a nearby school. Staff at Parkland have appreciated the increased opportunities to access professional development and support that this arrangement has made possible. It has contributed to improved outcomes for pupils. As the federation develops it is clear that a positive partnership is emerging which will allow each school to profit from joint expertise and a sharing of good practice. The federated headteacher and the head of school have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and demonstrate a high level of commitment to school improvement. Most middle leaders have a better understanding of their role and are now making a valid contribution to raising achievement. Members of the governing body have a

good strategic overview of the school's work and monitor initiatives designed to secure improvement well.

The local authority has provided good support through consultancy and training and this has helped the school to improve. The contribution of the local authority has been appreciated by staff and management.

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

Christopher Keeler
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- Raise standards in all subjects throughout the school, but particularly in Key Stage 2.
- Ensure that the quality of teaching, including marking, is consistently good in order to improve pupils' progress.
- Raise pupils' awareness and understanding of the diversity of cultures in the areas close to the school, in the United Kingdom, and further afield.