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27 January 2011

Mrs V Milne
Headteacher
Oswaldtwistle Moor End Primary School
White Ash Lane
Oswaldtwistle
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BB5 3JG

Dear Mrs Milne,

Notice to improve: monitoring inspection of Oswaldtwistle Moor End Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 26 January 2011 and for the information which you provided during the inspection. Please extend my thanks to the local authority representative, Chair of the Governing Body, staff and pupils who gave up their time to talk to me about the school.

Since the last inspection, one new member of staff has joined the school and a new chair of governors has just taken up post. Classes have been reorganised into discrete year groups.

As a result of the inspection on 11-12 May 2010, 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 is making satisfactory progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the pupils' achievement.

Pupils' achievement is improving as the quality of teaching improves. Pupils' attainment in Key Stage 1 assessments improved in 2010 to above average levels in reading and mathematics and average levels in writing. Work in pupils' books indicates that these improvements are being sustained. The school's own assessments show that more pupils are making expected progress across Years 3 to 6 than was previously the case. Pupils have historically made better progress in mathematics than they have in English because reading and writing skills have not been as well taught as mathematics skills. This is reflected in the 2010 Key Stage 2 assessments with pupils attaining in line with the national average in mathematics but well below average in English. Current standards of writing in Year 6 show improvement, but are still below average because there are gaps in pupils' skills, particularly in their understanding of grammar and punctuation. Staff and governors are fully committed to raising pupils' achievement and are taking appropriate action to promote improvement.

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Seven lessons and pupils' writing in Years 1 to 6 were sampled during the monitoring inspection. Evidence from these activities confirmed the school's view that teaching is improving and teachers' assessments of pupils' achievements are increasingly accurate. All staff have been involved in developing the teaching and learning policy and reviewing planning. Planning is now consistent across the school, with work better matched to the learning needs of different ability groups. Teachers have welcomed professional development opportunities to extend their teaching techniques and have introduced a greater range of activity into their lessons. They have improved the learning environment with more interesting displays and support for learning. Pupils told the inspector that they enjoy lessons, although some felt that they could be given more challenging work. They behaved well in the lessons observed and were keen to succeed.

Assessment and marking of pupils' work have been key foci for improvement across the whole school. Professional development is helping to establish accurate assessments in writing based on teachers' better understanding of National Curriculum levels. Teachers are conducting regular assessments which are moderated and used to inform subsequent teaching. This process is effectively supporting them in planning better matched activities based on pupils' prior learning. The deployment of teaching assistants has been reviewed to ensure they support or challenge groups of pupils according to their learning needs. Consequently, all pupils, including boys and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are making better progress than previously. Where marking is most effective, it provides clear guidance to help pupils understand how they can improve their work. However, there are still some inconsistencies in marking and some repeated errors in writing are left unchecked. Pupils now have personal learning targets for writing and mathematics, which are mostly helpful, but those relating to grammar and punctuation are not sufficiently well matched to their individual learning needs.

Revisions to curriculum planning and new resources have been introduced to help raise achievement in English. These include the introduction of discrete structured reading sessions and direct teaching of sounds and letters and spelling. Implementation of these changes is at early stages so it is too soon to evaluate their effectiveness. Pupils are being given many more opportunities to write for different purposes and practise their writing skills across all subjects. As a result they are developing a better understanding of the language features and structure of different types of writing.

The drive for improvement is being effectively led by the headteacher and deputy headteacher, with good support from local authority advisers and consultants. They are rigorously monitoring the quality of teaching and pupils' progress through lesson observations, scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work and analysis of assessment information. They have introduced a new system to monitor pupils' progress which gives them a clear indication of pupils' achievement in each year group. As a result, senior leaders have a clear overview of strengths and weaknesses in the quality of provision. They are aware that there is still some inadequate practice in teaching and are determinedly tackling weaknesses. Subject leaders are making helpful contributions as their roles develop. Governors are also developing their role in holding the school to account and monitoring

progress, supported by good quality training. The local authority's statement of action met requirements and they are continuing to provide appropriate support to build capacity within the school.

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

Jean Kendall
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place on 11-12 May 2010

- Improve attainment and achievement in English, especially for boys, by developing its use across all subjects.
- Ensure that the curriculum is sufficiently broad and closely matched to pupils' needs.
- Improve the quality of teaching and assessment to support learning by:
 - rigorous use of assessment information to plan work which matches all pupils' needs, interests and abilities
 - consistent application by all teaching staff of the school's systems and policies on assessment and teaching
 - regular moderation of marking to ensure the accuracy of assessments.