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Mrs Margaret White
The Headteacher
Moorlands Primary School
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Dear Mrs White

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

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 17 March 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please give my particular thanks to those members of the school council with whom I had a discussion.

Since the last inspection there has been little change in the school's context. One teacher is currently on leave, and a newly qualified teacher has been appointed to cover her absence.

As a result of the inspection on 10 and 11 March 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 has made satisfactory progress in making improvements, and satisfactory progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Their attainment remains broadly average. Although attainment in the current Year 6 is broadly average overall, it is higher in English, especially reading, than in mathematics. In Years 3 to 5, however, attainment in mathematics is similar to that in English. Pupils continue to make satisfactory overall progress in Years 3 to 6. Where progress is better than satisfactory, as in pupils' writing in Year 3, this reflects the teacher's good



knowledge and confidence in teaching the subject. Although attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is a little below average in Year 2, pupils are making rapid progress as a result of very effective teaching. In a well-organised lesson, for example, pupils in Year 2 made good progress in their writing because they had been well prepared for the task, which was appropriately matched to the learning needs of different groups. The lesson provided good opportunities for the teacher to assess pupils against their targets for improvement. Classroom displays also enabled pupils to improve their own writing by checking that it met the criteria for successful work. Across the school, the effective support that is given by teaching assistants enables pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to make the same satisfactory progress as others. The school's focus on raising attainment has been well supported by pupils' improved attendance in the current year to date.

The strong relationships between adults and pupils contribute well to pupils' good levels of attentiveness and behaviour. Teachers' planning for lessons is satisfactory, but does not always include tasks that are closely matched to pupils' previous attainment. This sometimes limits the extent of challenge. Good practice in assessment is evident in some classes and is having a positive impact on improving pupils' progress. The effective use of target booklets in Year 2 and target sheets in Year 3 are accelerating pupils' progress. The marking of pupils' writing in Year 3 is linked very well to their targets and to their particular learning needs. Pupils appreciate the use of green and pink highlighters by some teachers to indicate respectively the good features in their work or areas for improvement. In marking each pupil's mathematics work in Year 4, the teacher sets a further written task, and provides lesson time to allow for its completion. This leads to reflection and benefits pupils' learning. However, the good practice in marking and target setting is not consistent across the school, and has had greater impact on writing than on mathematics. For instance, pupils know their targets for writing better than those for mathematics.

There has been improvement in the effectiveness of leadership. In addition to the school's good systems to track pupils' performance, classteachers now analyse and report termly on their pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Subject leaders demonstrate an improved overview of achievement and provision in English and mathematics. As yet, however, neither of these improvements has had a strong impact on pupils' progress. The headteacher's monitoring of the quality of mathematics teaching has had a good focus on developing problem-solving activities. The impact is seen in improving opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge and skills.

The school promotes some aspects of pupils' cultural development well, for example through the broad range of musical opportunities and the teaching of Italian from Year 3. The use of the intercultural puppets and improvements to the library stock are helping to develop their awareness of life in multicultural Britain. Leaders are in the early stages of developing links with other schools in more culturally diverse



contexts in Southampton. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their understanding of the global dimension of community cohesion.

The school has sought support, which has included the effective involvement of partner headteachers. The School Improvement Partner has focused successfully on helping to improve staff accountability at all levels, and on better use of assessment and feedback to pupils. This work has contributed effectively to the development of the school's capacity to sustain improvement.

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

Chris Grove
Additional Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in March 2010

- Secure good achievement for all pupils by:
 - improving teachers' use of assessment to ensure that lessons always challenge and engage pupils well
 - developing teachers' marking and use of pupils' targets so that pupils understand what to do next to improve their work.
- Increase the effectiveness of all leaders by:
 - developing their role in regularly monitoring and evaluating the work of the school
 - supporting them in leading improvements and taking increased responsibility for ensuring success.
- Extend the school's strategy for community cohesion and for promoting pupils' cultural development by creating more opportunities for pupils to appreciate and value the wide variety of people's backgrounds and ways of life in the United Kingdom and the wider world.