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Mr L D Rouse
Tipton Green Junior School
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Dear Mr Rouse

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Tipton Green Junior School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 18 March 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please pass on my thanks to the Year 3 pupils I met with for their thoughtful comments about how the school has helped them settle in.

Around one quarter of the teaching staff have joined the school since the last inspection. A totally new school building is under construction at the rear of the presently occupied premises.

As a result of the inspection on 17 September 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.

Attainment on entry is broadly average according to the school's baseline testing. Improvements in the quality of teaching and the use of assessment are leading to better progress in lessons. Consequently, pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 has improved but remains within the broadly average band. Achievement is satisfactory. Attendance has improved too. At the time of the last inspection it was 92% but in the 18 months since it has risen markedly and now stands at 94.2%. This is because the school has introduced an extensive range of rewards for encouraging good attendance and robust actions are being pursued with persistent absentees.



Senior leaders have provided clarity about what constitutes good teaching and learning and ensured consistency in practice throughout the school by rigorously monitoring lessons to check this is happening. There has been a strong focus on establishing frequent and reliable assessments of pupils' work which inform the planning of future learning. Pupils of differing ability are now presented with work of appropriate challenge for their starting points. Pupils' books are marked diligently and teachers put a lot of effort into this aspect of their work. Mistakes are corrected and pupils are given detailed written guidance on how to improve their work and sometimes a supplementary task to check whether they have correctly understood how to do so. The three lessons observed during the visit were characterised by teachers making it very clear what they were expecting pupils to achieve, by a fast pace of learning and by a good use of questioning to check and extend pupils' understanding. Behaviour was good and pupils worked well independently or in small groups. An 'excellence notice board' is displayed prominently outside each classroom to celebrate the highest standards in recent work by the class and to make it explicitly clear to others the standards they are aiming for.

A comprehensive policy and procedures are now in place to ensure new pupils joining the school experience a smooth transition. Year 3 pupils spoken to were appreciative of the extensive opportunities they had to visit the school before they started there. They liked having their new teachers visit them at their infant school before transfer and they recognised the efforts the school had made to ensure they were in a class with their friends. The school provides a high quality 'welcome' booklet for new pupils which helps ensure that they are well informed about life at the school before they start. The good induction arrangements help new pupils settle in quickly and get off to a good start. Year 3 pupils were seen to be making good progress in the two lessons visited.

The school has conducted an audit of its local, national and international context and implemented a range of initiatives to promote community cohesion. For example, the audit showed an increasing proportion of pupils of Black African heritage joining the school where around half the pupils are of Asian British heritage and just under half are White British. The audit prompted the school to decide to celebrate and raise awareness of life and culture in Africa. Local partnerships enabled staff from the zoo to help set the scene for an imaginative role play about an elephant running amok in the school; for other adults to help pupils experience African drumming and dance; and for pupils to learn about farming methods there. Links have been established with other schools nationally and internationally to enable pupils to interact with others from different cultures and backgrounds to their own. Pupils at the school mix and get on very well together.

Despite having to manage a complete rebuild of the school on the same site, the headteacher and senior leaders have tackled the areas for improvement from the last inspection well. Good progress has been made on those listed in the annex as well as on other aspects of the school's work, such as improving attendance. The school's monitoring of the quality of teaching shows that around three quarters of



lessons are now consistently good or better. This has been confirmed by observations conducted by a representative of the local authority and is in line with the quality of teaching and learning seen during this visit. Attainment is beginning to rise as a result of the actions the school is taking, guided by astute advice from the local authority. The leadership of the school is demonstrating a good 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

David Anstead
Her Majesty's Inspector



Annex

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

- Ensure that pupils make better progress as they move through the school and achieve higher standards in each year group by raising the quality of teaching in all classes from satisfactory and good to good and outstanding. Pay particular attention to:
 - improving teachers' understanding of how to plan lessons so that tasks are well matched to ability and meet the learning needs of all pupils in mixed ability classes
 - making sure that pupils make similarly good or better progress in each class or year group.

- Extend the induction policy to include clear guidance for teachers on more effectively introducing pupils into Year 3 so that they settle quickly, learn the school's expectations of them and begin effective learning from the very start.

- Further develop the national and international dimensions of the community cohesion programme in order to develop pupils' global awareness.

