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17 March 2011

Mr C Lofthouse
Headteacher
Throckley Primary School
Hexham Road
Throckley
Newcastle-upon-Tyne
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NE15 9DY

Dear Mr Lofthouse,

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

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 16 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 my thanks to your Chair of the Governing Body and to those staff and pupils who met with me.

Since the inspection, the governing body has been reconstituted following a period of governance under an Interim Executive Board (IEB). Almost all members of the IEB now serve on the governing body.

As a result of the inspection on the 18 and 19 November 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 satisfactory progress in making improvements and good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

In 2010, pupils did not take part in the national tests at the end of Year 6. Teacher assessments show there was a marked improvement in mathematics but a slight decline in English attainment. Results in both subjects were below average, although this represents a sharp improvement in mathematics compared to the time of the previous inspection. The decline in English attainment was caused by a fall in pupils' reading scores. Effective work during the year resulted in improved science results. At Key Stage 1, there were modest improvements in reading and mathematics in 2010, but a decline in writing. Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was broadly average. Tracking evidence and information obtained from lesson observations and pupils' workbooks indicate that precise and effective work is leading to improvement at both key stages. Attainment of the current Year 6 cohort is appreciably higher than in 2010 and, while attainment is more variable in other classes, the underlying trend is one of improvement.

January 2011



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

The majority of pupils enjoy lesson activities and work well together. Older Year 6 pupils in particular are industrious, keen to succeed and demonstrate mature attitudes towards their work and each other. However, inspection evidence shows that effective work habits are not sufficiently embedded amongst pupils in Year 1 and Year 5.

Senior leaders have worked assiduously to improve the quality of teaching and learning with most lessons observed being good. Teachers' lesson planning reflects a good understanding of pupils' capabilities. Activities are well considered and teachers and support assistants use their time effectively to ensure that pupils are productively engaged and supported. At its best, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson for example, pupils were constantly challenged to build on prior learning. The teacher's excellent subject knowledge, pertinent questioning and demonstration provided the impetus for pupils to move forward and make good gains in their learning. Senior leaders have continued to improve the school's assessment procedures. These are particularly well managed, producing clear and concise summaries of pupils' progress and leading to carefully crafted action plans which provide pupils with targeted, effective support. Almost all marking is evaluative, giving pupils a clear understanding of how they have done against their targets.

The school has improved its capacity for making sustainable improvements at all levels of leadership. The headteacher, senior staff and the governing body have ensured there is a relentless focus on improving the quality of provision and pupils' outcomes. Monitoring and evaluation procedures are rigorous, providing an insightful awareness of the school's progress. Action planning is effective in bringing about improvements because weaknesses are being tackled decisively. Clear accountability ensures that teachers are held responsible for pupils' performance. Well-targeted training, including external support from the local authority, is proving effective in developing teachers' skills and competencies.

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

Tom Grieveson
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place on 18 - 19 November 2009

- Raise standards at Key Stage 2, particularly in mathematics and science by July 2010, and maintain these improvements in succeeding years.
- Raise the overall profile of teaching from satisfactory to good by:
 - regular marking of all pupils' work as an aid to them knowing how well they have done and what they need to do improve further
 - improving the quality of teachers' planning to identify more clearly what pupils are expected to learn
 - providing suitable learning challenges to all ability groups in all lessons.