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18 March 2011

Mrs S Jackson
Headteacher
Drighlington Primary School
Moorland Road
Drighlington
Bradford
West Yorkshire
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Dear Mrs Jackson,

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Drighlington 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 also pass on my thanks to the pupils and members of the governing body for meeting with me.

Since the previous inspection, there have been several staff changes. Two newly qualified teachers were appointed in September 2010. A part-time teacher took on a full-time role and another part-time teacher was appointed in December 2010. The new Chair of the Governing Body was elected in November 2010.

As a result of the inspection on 7 and 8 December 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.

The school's 2010 Year 6 test results showed improvements in English and mathematics, particularly in the proportions of pupils reaching higher levels of performance. These pupils made satisfactory progress through the school to reach overall standards slightly below the national averages. The school's improved assessment information shows that the current Year 6 pupils are making better progress and are on track to reach securely average standards. Throughout the school, the accurate tracking shows that most pupils are now making better than the expected levels of progress and attainment is rising.

This picture of improving learning can be seen in lessons throughout the school, where teaching observed was often good. Teachers' secure organisation and relationships ensure lessons proceed at a good pace and they involve pupils well through challenging questioning. The school has taken successful action in identifying key features of good

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teaching to be used in all lessons. As a result, all teachers make good use of agreed strategies, such as the use of clear learning objectives and 'steps to success' to help pupils know what they need to do to succeed. Marking is regular and supportive; pupils show good understanding of the consistently used systems. Pupils are responding well to this improved teaching and they try hard in their tasks. They enjoy their lessons and many speak positively of recent improvements, including the attention that has been paid to developing more creativity within the curriculum. 'Lessons are even better fun now' said one.

The school's emphasis on promoting group working is also proving effective as pupils show improving levels of independence when tackling their work. Teachers have good knowledge of how well each pupil is doing and generally use this information to plan tasks that meet the needs of pupils of different abilities. In lessons where progress is satisfactory, teachers do not make full use of what they know to focus tasks on helping pupils to improve the underlying skills they need to make good progress.

Effective steps have been taken to broaden pupils' experiences of a wide range of cultures. Pupils show growing understanding of the lives of others, for example, when talking about life in a village in India and when showing empathy with those caught in the recent disasters in Japan. An increasing range of visits and visitors is bringing them into contact with different cultures in Britain and pupils show good levels of interest and appreciation. Work towards gaining the next level of the Steven Lawrence Award has been effective; pupils speak forcefully about why they feel racism is wrong.

Senior leaders and members of the governing body have a good understanding of the school's position through increased and effective monitoring, well supported by work with representatives of the local authority. Regular observations of teaching and discussions regarding pupils' progress are being used to identify where greater intervention is needed to ensure all pupils make good progress. Improved and more accurate assessment systems give the school a much firmer knowledge of the progress of different groups of pupils. As a result, effective strategies are being used to reduce past concerns, such as the gap between boys' and girls' performances. School developments are focused more securely on raising attainment and systems for target setting are becoming sharper. Senior leaders are aware that there is still more to do to secure fully improvements in pupils' achievement. However, the improvements made in the quality of teaching and developments in assessment, target setting and monitoring since the previous inspection demonstrate the school's developing capacity.

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

Mr Tony Painter
Additional Inspector

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Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place on 7 and 8 December 2009

- Raise attainment and accelerate the progress made by all pupils by:
 - ensuring that in all lessons good quality teaching generates high levels of interest, stimulates pupils' learning and encourages them to become independent learners
 - making full use of assessment data to ensure that the work provided for pupils of differing abilities always closely matches their needs
 - providing pupils with clear information, during lessons and through marking, on what they need to achieve and how to improve.
- Use incisively the information collected about the school's performance to determine how different factors are influencing outcomes for pupils and to ensure plans for development focus sharply on raising attainment.
- Raise pupils' awareness and appreciation of communities and cultures in modern Britain that are different to their own.