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6 April 2011

Mrs Caroline Rodgers
Parwich Primary School
Parwich
Ashbourne
Derbyshire
DE6 1QJ

Dear Mrs Rodgers,

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

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on Tuesday 5 April, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. Please pass on my thanks to the staff and the Chair of the Governing Body for their time and courtesy. I would like particularly to thank the pupils for the most enjoyable time I spent talking with them.

Since the school's last inspection there have been no significant contextual changes.

As a result of the inspection on 11 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.

There are very small numbers of pupils in each cohort and this means that results of national tests vary significantly from year to year. However, results for pupils at the end of Year 6 had generally been below national averages in both English and mathematics over the three years until 2010, when they improved significantly and results in both subjects were well above national averages. Evidence from lesson observations, including pupils' work, confirms that there is an upward trend emerging. School tracking data shows that pupils are making at least satisfactory progress in lessons and over time, with many making good progress. This improved progress is the result of better provision, more effective use of targets, raised expectations and the impact of strong, strategic leadership.

Since the previous inspection, the proportion of good lessons has increased. Lessons observed during the inspection confirm the school's own self-evaluation and overall, teaching is good. Teachers are extremely well prepared and planning is detailed and appropriate. Planning identifies clear learning intentions, as well as different tasks and outcomes for all groups of pupils, including higher attaining pupils and those who require additional support. This is ensuring that all pupils are making better progress since the last inspection and have suitably challenging work. The school is beginning to make effective use of improvement targets for pupils in English and mathematics. Discussion with pupils confirmed that these are supporting them in knowing the next steps in their learning, in helping to increase their rates of progress and in providing them with a clearer understanding of what they need to do to improve further. Marking is good. Teachers celebrate pupils' accomplishments and give pointers for improvement which are clearly focused upon what is needed to improve their work. Consequently, marking is making a valuable contribution to improving progress and raising attainment. A scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that the recently introduced presentation policy is being effectively implemented by all staff to ensure that pupils take a pride in their work. Relationships are good at all levels and behaviour is exemplary.

The curriculum has been reorganised and is now based on topics and projects through which a wide range of skills are taught and developed. The curriculum provides effective and imaginative opportunities for pupils' personal development, as well as for the development and consolidation of their literacy and numeracy skills. There is a strong emphasis on purposeful learning. Pupils talk enthusiastically about many of their lessons. In particular, they enjoy a variety of special themed days which provide them with exciting opportunities to learn in a fun and interactive way.

Action to strengthen the school's provision and outcomes has been concerted and effective. The headteacher and the governing body have an accurate picture and understanding of the school's strengths and its priorities for further development. School self-evaluation is accurate and its procedures for monitoring performance are robust. The good progress made since the previous inspection demonstrates that the school has a good capacity for further improvement.

The school values the good support provided by the local authority, particularly the challenge and guidance of the School Improvement Partner.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Dorothy Bathgate
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that at least 80% is good by the end of July 2010 by:
 - ensuring that tasks accurately match pupils' ages and ability
 - integrating pupils' targets into lessons more effectively, including a link to teachers' marking
 - introducing a new policy for presentation and handwriting in order to raise the expectations of teachers and to ensure that all pupils take a pride in their work.

- Raise standards to above average by the end of July 2010 by ensuring that more able pupils are suitably challenged.

- Reorganise the curriculum by the end of April 2010, especially in Years 3 to 6, to provide a better balance of subjects over time, especially in science, and to ensure that there is a progression of skills throughout.