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Mrs Anna Brown
Headteacher
Castleford Townville Infants' School
Poplar Avenue
Townville
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West Yorkshire
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Dear Mrs Brown

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Castleford Townville Infants' School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 5 May 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussion and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please give my particular thanks to the members of the governing body and to the pupils for the help they gave during the inspection.

Since the last inspection two Newly Qualified Teachers have joined the staff of the school.

As a result of the inspection on 8 and 9 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 good progress in making improvements and good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Pupils' achievement and attainment are rising and pupils in Key Stage 1 are making better progress, both in lessons and over time. Their work and the school's tracking data show this in mathematics in particular. This improvement arises from higher expectations, especially of the more-able pupils. Children enter the Nursery class with skills below those expected for their age. However, the quality of provision, noted at the last inspection, and their progress in the Nursery and Reception classes have been maintained. Increasingly accurate assessment at Key Stage 1 is helping teachers build on these foundations when planning lessons. Pupils are gaining a stronger understanding of mathematics, resulting from more practical work and increased opportunities to practise their skills independently, both indoors and outside. Pupils' progress in literacy is also improving, especially in Year 2 where more pupils are able to write fluently and at length. Many pupils engage in more animated and imaginative dialogue, for example, as they work outside to search for plants or to build a castle, with moat, drawbridge and dragon. However, opportunities to record these discussions and findings in writing remain limited for some pupils. Pupils show greater

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independence, are eager to take on more responsibility and are able to concentrate for a growing length of time.

Improvements in pupils' learning and progress arise from greater consistency in the quality of teaching and assessment. Planning reflects the wide range of needs in the class more closely and, in the more-effective lessons, pupils are clearer about what is expected of them. Teachers' sharper use of assessment also provides a better indication of where further practice is needed. Most teachers are giving pupils more challenging work, for example, on number patterns, money or place value. This is accelerating the progress of the more-able pupils. Teaching assistants are better deployed in extending pupils' learning by giving increasingly focused support to individuals or by leading an activity with a small group. Occasionally, checks on learning at the end of the lesson remain rushed. As a result, opportunities are missed for pupils to explain what they have learned and for the teacher to check this.

The school has given pupils more experiences of different cultures and religions. This has been achieved through visitors to school and by visits, for example to a mosque, and is increasing pupils' understanding of other communities.

Monitoring and evaluation are increasingly systematic and rigorous and based on a wider range of evidence. Closer checks are made on lesson planning and teachers are now evaluating the effectiveness of their lessons. This is helping them to adjust activities to secure a better match of work to the pupils' needs and is accelerating learning and progress. Senior leaders have a sharper view of the effectiveness of teaching and learning through joint observations with the School Improvement Adviser and with headteachers of other schools. This has helped them identify where support is needed to increase the consistency of teaching further. The teachers new to the school since the last inspection have brought fresh ideas which are helping to enliven learning and to raise expectations of what the pupils can achieve. The more-focused actions of leaders, based on increasingly accurate evaluation of the school's work, along with the effective support of the local authority School Improvement Adviser, are enabling the school to demonstrate a stronger capacity for sustained 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

Liz Godman
Additional inspector

Annex

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

- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching and learning and improve the progress of pupils, especially the more able by:
 - introducing a school policy to guide teaching and learning and to help ensure that the school's expectations are understood, implemented and met in all classes
 - ensure that all teachers regularly specify what a good piece of work should look like so that pupils have a clear understanding of how to improve their work
 - provide carefully tailored additional programmes and additional challenge to support the learning of more-able pupils.
- Provide pupils with first-hand experience of other cultures in the United Kingdom.