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10 June 2011

Mrs S Fisher
Headteacher
Moons Moat First School
Cleeve Close
Redditch
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Dear Mrs Fisher

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Moons Moat First School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 9 June 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please convey my thanks to the pupils for their friendly manner.

As a result of the inspection on 14 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 satisfactory progress in making improvements and satisfactory progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Since the last inspection, attainment at Key Stage 1 has improved. In 2010, an increased proportion of pupils reached nationally expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics. Similarly, the proportion of pupils attaining higher Level 3 results increased in each of these subjects. The school's latest assessments show that the school has maintained these standards and that the proportion of pupils in Year 2 performing at expected levels is in line with the national average.

The school's focus on providing regular and lively storytelling sessions and on improving reading resources have helped to improve pupils' achievement in reading. With support from local authority advisers, staff have introduced new strategies to encourage children to segment and blend their sounds. From an early age, children are now provided with systematic phonics sessions which help to improve their reading development. In a well delivered phonics lesson, Year 1 pupils made good progress and enjoyed using robot actions as they sounded out words containing 'air'.



Improved access to outdoor areas for children in the Reception Year has increased opportunities for children to choose activities indoors and outside. This free access has helped to encourage children's independence and self-confidence. Leaders of the Early Years Foundation Stage have extended opportunities for children to develop their mathematical understanding. During an activity outdoors, children developed their number and counting skills well with the good support of a teaching assistant. The teaching assistant used a wide range of questions to challenge and develop children's counting and recognition of numbers. However, this approach is not consistent across the school and support staff are not consistently provided with clear plans and instructions.

Teaching across the school is satisfactory and consistently provides greater levels of challenge for pupils of all abilities. Planning regularly details the different activities that pupils are expected to complete in a lesson. Teachers are making better use of assessments to ensure that these activities are more closely matched to the abilities of different groups of pupils. Pupils know how to produce a good piece of work because time is taken to clearly record and share this information with them. As a result, the school is beginning to address pupils' previous underachievement and low starting points. A whole-school approach has improved pupils' presentation and handwriting. Year 2 pupils produced regular and well-formed letters whilst writing instructions on growing sunflowers. Several pupils wrote fluently with joined up writing

Across Years 3 and 4, pupils' progress is more consistent and is never less than satisfactory. Teachers take care to build good relationships and value the contributions of pupils of all abilities. As a result, pupils show positive attitudes to learning in the majority of lessons. Good teaching in Year 4 is helping pupils to address their previous underachievement and raise attainment. The school's most recent assessments show that the current attainment of Year 4 pupils is improving but that their progress across Key Stage 2 in mathematics remains weaker. This is because pupils are not provided with sufficient opportunities to increase their basic computational skills and this undermines their ability to solve number problems quickly and confidently.

The school's capacity to continue to improve is satisfactory. Leaders and managers have produced a school development plan that is accurately focussed on the key areas. Subject leaders have developed their roles and responsibilities and produce action plans aimed at improving individual subjects. These provide a clear strategy and framework to develop the school and improve key areas. Monitoring is regular and helps to evaluate the school's progress in raising achievement. Information from assessments is used regularly to ensure that pupils' progress is closely monitored. Senior leaders respond quickly to ensure that teachers draw up plans to provide additional support for individual pupils. Lesson observations have ensured that the quality of teaching and learning across the school is more consistent. However, in seeking to raise achievement to consistently good levels, these evaluations do not consistently focus on the progress of different groups of pupils.

The school completes all appropriate checks on the suitability of staff and governors. Senior leaders and the Chair of the Governing Body have recently completed safer recruitment training. The school's safeguarding policies and procedures are reviewed regularly. The school keeps careful records and works with other professional agencies to ensure that vulnerable pupils are closely monitored. The school ensures that risk assessments are completed as required but those to address hazards in outdoor areas lack sufficient rigour.

The school has made good progress in improving pupils' rates of attendance. Pupils are encouraged to attend regularly through certificates and special assemblies. In addition, the school has received regular support from the Education Welfare Officer in adopting a more immediate response to any instances of persistent absence. This has been effective in ensuring that pupils' attendance over the course of the academic year has improved and is now satisfactory.

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

Mark Lindfield
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

Seek further support from the local authority, as a matter of urgency, to improve the erratic attendance and lack of punctuality of pupils and the negative impact of these factors on their achievement.

Ensure that pupils achieve more consistently across the school, particularly in mathematics, by;

- providing greater levels of challenge, especially for more able pupils
- building upon and further refining teachers' understanding and use of assessment
- giving greater priority to improving pupils' handwriting and presentation of written work