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Mrs V Wang
Headteacher
Maulden Lower School
Church Road
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Dear Mrs Wang

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Maulden Lower School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 14 June 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussion and for the information which you provided during the inspection. Please also pass on my thanks to your deputy headteacher, the chair of governors and the local authority for their time and involvement as well.

Since the last inspection, there have been a number of staff changes. A new headteacher was appointed in April 2010. A new member of the teaching staff joined in September 2010. A number of teaching assistants have either had their hours of support changed or have taken redundancy.

As a result of the inspection on 16 September 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 in raising achievement, and good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Good progress is being made in improving achievement across the school. The emphasis which the school has rightly put on accelerating progress across all core subjects (English, mathematics and science) is already having a positive impact. In the majority of classes, planning takes into account the different needs of both individuals and groups. In English and mathematics in Years 3 and 4, teachers plan work across the two year groups in order to ensure that the work is suitably matched to the different needs of individual pupils. Within the groups, work is planned to ensure that all pupils achieve to the best of their ability. This change in

September 2010



planning and organisation for the classes with the oldest pupils in the school supports the good progress that pupils make and allows them to achieve well. Consequently, these pupils are attaining standards which are above those nationally for their age. Likewise, pupils at the end of Year 2 are making good progress and achieving well in reading, writing and mathematics.

The quality of teaching is improving, with more lessons judged as good or outstanding. Teachers have a clearer understanding about assessment and its use. This, along with an accurate analysis of what pupils achieve, means that teachers are more aware of what their pupils need to do to improve in order to raise attainment still further. There is now a consistent approach to marking pupils' work and in the setting of targets. Marking is relevant and supports pupils in understanding what they need to do to help to improve their work still further. Target setting for individual pupils is now an integral part of teachers' support for pupils. Older pupils in Years 3 and 4 are involved in helping to set their own targets to aim for. These targets are easily accessible as a reminder when pupils are working. They are relevant, sometimes individual, and usually achievable in a short space of time. This helps pupils to see that they are making progress and spurs them on to achieve even more. All pupils spoken to were able to explain what their individual targets are and why they had been given them. Younger pupils have targets within their English and mathematics books so that they can refer to them as they work. This is enhancing and increasing the progress which pupils make in their learning. Pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well.

A complete review of planning across the school and timely professional development have resulted in subject coordinators having 'ownership' of the areas of the curriculum for which they are responsible. They set their own targets for improvement within their subjects, being held to account for their curriculum areas and reporting back to the governing body on the progress that is being made. Subject coordinators' overview feeds into the school development plan which, in turn, is having a positive impact on a consistent approach to planning and progression of learning across the school, as no topics are now duplicated. Consequently, pupils progressively build on their skills, knowledge and understanding year on year.

The local authority provides effectively targeted support for the school. Sound advice, coupled with specialist support in raising attainment and increasing progress in mathematics, and governor training, have supported the school in making good progress. Inspection evidence shows that this additional, focused support has been effective in improving the quality of teaching and the capacity of leaders at all levels in enhancing school 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

Susan Vale
Additional Inspector



Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in (insert month and year)

- Increase the progress made by pupils throughout Key Stages 1 and 2, particularly in mathematics and science, by providing pupils with clear guidance on how to improve their work.
- Raise levels of achievement by ensuring that coordinators are more effective in leading and managing their subjects and holding staff to account.
- Ensure activities are precisely matched to the learning needs of individual pupils, particularly those of middle ability.