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30 June 2011

Mr A Staton
Headteacher
St Ann's Junior and Infant School
St Leonard's Road
Eastwood
Rotherham
South Yorkshire
S65 1PD

Dear Mr Staton,

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of St Ann's Junior and Infant School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 29 June 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussion and for the information which you provided during the inspection. Please pass on my thanks to the following people who came to school to talk to me during the inspection: the Chair and her colleague from the Governing Body; the School Improvement Adviser; the School Improvement Partner; and the Director of the Learning Community.

As a result of the inspection on 16 November 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 proportion of pupils making better than expected progress in all classes has increased considerably since the previous inspection. As a result, school records and pupils' work show that standards of attainment in English and mathematics have risen in 2010 and 2011. The main reason for the improvement is the school's much greater effectiveness in raising the achievement of the large number of pupils who arrive at all points during the year with little skill in speaking English and, in many cases, little previous experience of schooling. Their needs are precisely assessed on arrival and they receive very well adapted teaching, mostly without having to be withdrawn from the curriculum received by the rest of their class. They, therefore, make very rapid progress during their first year in school. The contribution of teaching assistants to this work has greatly improved since the previous inspection and there is a much greater consistency across all classes in applying the school's priority to make 'every lesson a language lesson'.

Teachers are making much more use of information and communication technology since the previous inspection, especially to extend pupils' reading and writing skills. This is

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because the recently appointed subject leader has secured better provision of equipment and arranged training for all staff, which is carefully tailored to their individual needs. The subject leader has correctly identified that the next stage of development is to ensure that computer work is always at a suitably challenging level for pupils.

The headteacher and two assistant headteachers provide a strong driving force for the improvements in teaching and assessment that are bringing about rising standards of attainment. One of their particular strengths is the way they monitor pupils' progress and use this information to guide all teachers and teaching assistants on where and how to focus their work so that it has the greatest positive impact on pupils' achievement. They are in the process of further refining their progress monitoring system to improve their termly evaluation of the extent to which support programmes accelerate the progress of pupils with additional needs. Since the previous inspection, they have extended the team of senior leaders, which is helping them to embed effective practice across the school. They have enabled these new leaders to be highly effective in their work by giving them a guaranteed amount of leadership time and a clear focus for how they will use it within short-term action plans for raising pupils' achievement. One good example of how they help teachers and teaching assistants to improve their work is the way they observe lessons and provide very clear feedback on how to improve pupils' learning. Subsequently, they make follow-up observations to ensure the required improvements are firmly in place.

In improving provision and outcomes since the previous inspection, the school has benefitted considerably from guidance provided by the local authority and School Improvement Partner. This guidance has reduced significantly as the school leadership team's capacity for raising standards of attainment has grown. The school has also gained much from partnerships with other schools through its membership of the area Learning Community. At the same time, they are contributing much to these partnerships by sharing the effective practice they have developed in the last two years, especially their use of pupil progress tracking.

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

John Rutherford
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place on 16 November 2009

- Improve pupils' progress in English, mathematics and ICT by:
 - making sure they are consistently developed in every appropriate lesson
 - making the best use of resources, especially computers and appropriate software
 - making sure all teaching staff have effective training in the use of new technology in the whole curriculum.

- Improve the consistency of teaching and learning throughout the school by:
 - ensuring rigorous quality assurance of teaching, and especially learning, by senior leaders
 - strengthening the role of middle leaders to judge the quality of learning in their areas of responsibility.