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15 July 2011

Mr J Eglin
Morda CofE Primary School
Morda
Oswestry
SY10 9NR

Dear Mr Eglin

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Morda CofE Primary School

Thank you for the help which you, your staff and members of the governing body gave when I inspected your school on 14 July 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection.

There are no significant changes in the context of the school since the inspection.

As a result of the inspection on 15 and 16 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 satisfactory progress in making improvements and satisfactory progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Although the school did not carry out national tests in 2010, teacher assessments at the end of Year 6 indicate that there was a significant improvement in the proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels in both English and mathematics. The 2011 test results are still to be validated, but it is clear that most of the pupils made expected progress in both English and mathematics and that attainment is average. Results for Year 2 pupils are also average. In other year groups, pupils are making at least expected progress. This is a result of the school's effective efforts to improve the teaching of writing and mathematics.

Observations of lessons and scrutiny of work during this inspection confirmed the senior leaders' judgements that the school is close to meeting the target set for increasing the proportion of good teaching. In the great majority of lessons, pupils behave well and work together effectively. They are clear about what they are learning and how they will demonstrate success. The focus on improving the

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teaching of writing means that pupils are increasingly able to write confidently. They use a range of vocabulary and punctuation appropriate for their age. Pupils are familiar with their literacy targets and confident in referring to them to measure their progress. They work well with partners to share their ideas, for example about a poem on the French Revolution, and this develops their understanding of the craft of writing. Weaker aspects of provision evident in a very small minority of lessons and books were low expectations regarding pupil engagement, simplistic methods for checking if pupils have met their lesson objectives and the use of worksheets that limit the quality of the pupils' responses.

There is now a consistent approach to teachers' marking across the school. Teachers identify and correct important errors in pupils' work, especially in writing. They provide clear guidance to pupils on what they should do to improve their work. Pupils increasingly assess their own work and that of their peers, making suggestions for improvement. Handwriting and spelling skills are improving but the proportion of pupils not writing in a fluent cursive style remains too high.

The headteacher and senior staff have established a clear vision for improving the school based upon the main recommendations from the last inspection. They express this through an action plan containing precise targets. However, although senior staff monitor the impact of the plan through evaluations of teaching, and pupils' work and progress, the information gathered is not always collated or sufficiently clearly presented to demonstrate the progress being made. The tracking of pupils' progress in writing is thorough and focuses on specific areas. The school is beginning to track progress similarly in reading and mathematics. The leaders of English and mathematics and the special educational needs coordinator are beginning to identify effective practice, provide useful training and encourage teachers to share successful approaches. Training provided since the last inspection has enabled the governing body to hold the school's leaders to account for standards and quality more rigorously. Also in response to the previous inspection, individual governors meet subject leaders and visit lessons to find out more about what is happening at school.

The local authority provides effective training and support for staff and governors. Lesson observations conducted by the School Improvement Partner have helped the school build on its strengths and tackle areas for development.

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

Anthony O'Malley
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- Raise levels of attainment and further accelerate pupils' progress throughout - the school, especially in mathematics and writing, by:
 - improving the quality of teaching so that 80% is good and 10% outstanding by December 2010
 - ensuring consistency in assessment and marking so that all pupils know and understand what they need to do next to improve
 - ensuring consistently high expectations of spelling, punctuation and presentation in written work.
- Strengthen leadership and management further by:
 - ensuring action plans for improvement contain clear and precise targets and indicate clearly when actions will be monitored, by whom and how the resultant findings will be shared
 - ensuring that subject leaders monitor the quality of pupils' learning and findings are translated into actions that will bring about further improvement
 - ensuring that governors find out more about what is happening in school for themselves and hold the school to account for standards and quality.

