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21 September 2011

Mrs L Kearney
Headteacher
Hodge Hill Primary School
Twycross Grove
Hodge Hill
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B36 8LD

Dear Mrs Kearney

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Hodge Hill Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school with Elizabeth Cooper, additional inspector, on 20 September 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please pass on our thanks to the staff, pupils and the representatives of the governing body.

Since the previous inspection the school has undergone some changes in staffing. A new headteacher was appointed with effect from September 2011. The governing body is in the process of making an appointment for an assistant headteacher, a post that has been vacant for some time. There is an extensive building programme currently taking place.

As a result of the inspection on 11 May 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 inadequate progress in making improvements. The inspection has raised very serious concerns.

The key factor in the judgement of inadequate progress is that achievement and progress have not improved sufficiently in mathematics over the last three years, particularly by the end of Key Stage 1 and did not improve sufficiently by the end of Key Stage 2 in 2011.

Four out of the nine lessons observed jointly with the senior leadership team during the monitoring inspection were judged to be inadequate. Consequently, teaching is inadequate. Teachers' planning of lessons is too generalised and does not include activities or strategies to meet the different needs of pupils. Teachers do not

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sufficiently engage pupils' interest. The pace of learning is not sufficiently brisk to allow progress to be made. Additionally, teachers do not use questions and questioning techniques to fully engage and challenge pupils' knowledge and understanding. As a result, pupils make inadequate progress. Despite uninspiring teaching, pupils remain compliant and well-behaved. They work enthusiastically and are eager to learn.

Assessment information, is not used by all teachers to plan their lessons sufficiently to meet the range of pupils' needs. Consequently, pupils are not provided with clear targets for improvement. Senior leaders have established a new marking policy. However, this is not being used consistently by all staff. The best marking seen in books informs pupils what they have done well but also gives them an opportunity at the beginning of each lesson to respond to the comments raised by teachers and to ask for any clarifications. However, this is not a consistent feature of marking across all subjects and year groups.

The senior leadership team has recently reviewed the schools' development plan which correctly identifies the areas for improvement and there are detailed and realistic plans to address them. They demonstrate determination to bring about improvement and although these plans are at the early stages of implementation, there is some evidence of improvements. There have been significant changes to the governing body, with five new governors appointed since the previous inspection. The governing body has received training from the local authority which has enabled them to understand their roles and responsibilities.

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

Rashida Sharif
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in May 2010 were to:

- Raise standards and improve pupils' progress, particularly in mathematics, by:
 - ensuring that teachers consistently maintain an accurate record of each pupil's prior learning
 - using this information to set clear next steps in learning for each pupil
 - ensuring that teachers refer to these next steps and give pupils clear guidance on how they can improve, when marking pupils' work.

- Improve the consistency of teaching so that it is uniformly good or better by:
 - ensuring that further opportunities are provided for the best practice in the school to be shared with other staff
 - providing more opportunities for teachers to work together and share ideas.

- Ensure that all governors receive training in and fully understand their roles and responsibilities by December 31 2010 and use effectively the funds available to provide further resources to promote pupils' progress and well-being.