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Miss H Mellody
Headteacher
Langtree Community School and Nursery Unit
Langtree
Torrington
Devon
EX38 8NF

Dear Miss Mellody

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Langtree Community School and Nursery Unit

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 6 October 2011, for the time you gave to our telephone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. In particular, please pass on my thanks to Penny Mason your governor representative and the members of staff who gave freely of their time to meet with me. Also, please would you pass on my thanks to the pupils who spoke with me so positively about their school.

As a result of the inspection on 6 and 7 July 2010, the school was asked to address the most important areas for improvement which are set out in the annex to this letter. Since that time a new permanent Key Stage 1 teacher has been appointed and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body have retired.

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.

Self-evaluation has become better focused on pupils' achievements and outcomes. An effective system of monitoring pupils' progress has been established from the moment children enter school in the Nursery and is now being used effectively to guide teachers' planning so that they might better provide for pupils' learning needs and raise their overall achievements. As a result, pupils are more frequently experiencing teaching that sets higher expectations as teachers plan lessons that better provide for the individual needs of pupils. Recent test results for 2011 show positive improvements in pupils' achievements in reading, writing and mathematics



particularly at Key Stage 1. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2, however, is more variable. Recent results in mathematics were high and yet attainment in English was low, particularly for writing. The school is aware of this issue and has started to look at ways it can strengthen the teaching of reading and provide greater opportunities for pupils to exercise their writing skills across the curriculum. This was evident in a Key Stage 2 class where pupils were eager to answer questions posed by the teacher in a guided reading session. Further, assessment data indicate the school is beginning to help an increasing proportion of pupils to play more of an active role in lessons. As a result, pupils throughout the school are making better progress in lessons.

The headteacher has worked determinedly to strengthen the assessment and tracking of pupils' learning and progress throughout the school. As a result, leaders and managers now possess a more secure understanding of what pupils need to learn in order to lift their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. Through a more distributed leadership style, introduced by the headteacher, middle leaders have been encouraged to take on more responsibility. They can now speak with more confidence about the changes and positive work that has gone on since the previous inspection. As a result, staff now demonstrate a secure knowledge and understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Literacy and numeracy subject leaders in particular have fully embraced the need to play a more strategic role in the development of their subjects and of the curriculum as a whole. Lessons are now more carefully planned to engage pupils in their learning and to improve links between home and school. However, opportunities for pupils to regularly reflect on their learning, comment on teachers' marking and set themselves personal targets that will help to accelerate the progress they make in lessons are undeveloped. Comments from parents and carers who spoke with Her Majesty's Inspector at the time of the monitoring inspection said communications between school and home had improved and were effective.

Pupils' attendance has historically been well above average and continues to remain so. In part this reflects the very positive attitudes pupils have towards their school and the good relationships that are fostered and maintained with all adults through the regular 'family group' pastoral sessions that take place fortnightly. The school also ensures adults are appropriately trained and kept up to date in safeguarding pupils and is vigilant in the way that records are kept.

There have been significant changes to the governing body recently. However, despite this governance shows determination and a growing confidence to challenge yet support leaders in tackling the remaining weaknesses that persist within the school. A mixture of expert knowledge, experience and dedication exhibited by the headteacher and her workforce means the school is in safe and capable hands. Leaders have received appropriate support from the local authority in order to strengthen teachers' subject knowledge and are confident in what the school needs to do in continuing to lift attainment and learning outcomes for pupils. As a result, the school's effectiveness in tackling areas for improvement is strengthening and evidence of its continuing capacity to improve further.



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

David Edwards

Her Majesty's Inspector



Annex

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

- Raise achievement in English and mathematics for all groups of pupils in Years 1 to 6 by:
 - embedding the assessment and tracking system fully across the school
 - improving the pace of learning and teachers' expectations of what each pupil can achieve in lessons
 - checking each pupil's progress rigorously.

- Develop the roles of subject leaders so that they contribute more fully to monitoring the work of the school including the amount and quality of pupils' homework.

- Improve assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that there is a clear view of children's progress from their starting points to their entry into Year 1.