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Mrs G Bassett  
Headteacher  
Lacey Gardens Junior School  
Lacey Gardens  
Louth  
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Dear Mrs Bassett

### **Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Lacey Gardens Junior School**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 3 November 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 my thanks to the pupils and staff with whom I met during the day.

Since the last inspection, the on-site Learning Support Unit has closed. There have been no other significant staff changes.

As a result of the inspection on 5 July 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.

Pupils' attainment since the last inspection is showing steady improvement, following a sustained period of low attainment in recent years. The unvalidated data from pupils' tests and assessments in 2011 show that attainment in reading and writing at the end of Key Stage 2 has improved significantly since 2010. Attainment in mathematics has risen slightly. However, this masks inconsistencies between the progress of different groups of pupils. Girls leaving the school in 2011 made much slower progress than boys across the key stage in mathematics and this resulted in them leaving Year 6 with below average attainment. The latest school tracking data, confirmed by inspection evidence, indicate that gaps are closing and different groups of pupils across the school are making satisfactory progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils make slower progress in lower Key Stage 2, particularly in mathematics, and demonstrate weaknesses in their calculation skills.



Pupils made at least satisfactory and more often good progress in the lessons seen during the inspection. Senior leaders' monitoring indicates that the set target of 80% good or better teaching across the school by July 2011 has been achieved. Teachers have improved the ways in which they use day-to-day assessment to support pupils' learning. For example, teachers' good and skilful use of questioning to ascertain the understanding of learners was a strong feature in all lessons observed. Skilful questioning also challenges pupils effectively in developing their speaking and thinking skills. Routinely, the teachers' planning focuses on clear learning objectives and, in lessons, the teachers explain carefully what they expect the pupils to learn so that they understand what they have to do. In most lessons, learning activities are appropriate and meet the needs and abilities of different groups of pupils, including the more able. However, on some occasions the pace of learning is still too slow and pupils spend too much time listening to the teacher, or simply copying out information. Pupils make slower progress in these lessons, and more-able pupils say that they find work to be too easy for them.

Pupils in some classes have individual writing and mathematics targets but there is no consistent system in place across the school to provide pupils with subject-specific, individual targets. In classes where targets are displayed on walls, pupils are still not able to explain the next steps they need to take in order to improve their learning, demonstrating that current systems are ineffective. This remains a priority for the school before the next inspection. There are examples of good quality written feedback in pupils' exercise books. Teachers' comments in these books explain clearly how pupils can improve their work. However, there remain some inconsistencies across the school in the quality of marking and feedback. The quality of teachers' marking in literacy books is often of better quality than in mathematics books, providing greater detail, clarity and guidance for learners.

The school has made satisfactory progress in demonstrating a better capacity to improve. The school has well-developed and improved systems in place to track the performance of pupils over time. However, action and improvement plans do not support rapid improvement as well as they could do. This is because some of the school's priorities are not covered in sufficient depth, for example the development of pupils' calculation skills in mathematics. Furthermore, action plans do not clearly lay out who will be responsible for monitoring the impact and effectiveness of actions, or over what period of time. Leaders of English and mathematics are also members of the school's senior leadership team. They play an active and effective role in monitoring the quality of teaching and in analysing pupils' performance data. Leaders with other responsibilities, including subject or theme co-ordination roles, do not frequently have the opportunity to observe and support the improvement of their colleagues' teaching. This means that the features of the best teaching practice are not consistently embedded across the school.

Professional partners, working in collaboration with the local authority have supported the school effectively since the last inspection. Detailed monitoring reports have accurately identified the school's strengths and areas for further development.

The central record of suitability checks on staff was scrutinised during this visit and found to meet current government requirements.

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

Jeremy Spencer  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## Annex

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

- Accelerate pupils' progress, especially in mathematics and writing, by improving the quality of teaching so that at least 80% of lesson observations are judged good or better by July 2011, by:
  - ensuring that all teachers use assessment information rigorously in planning so that lessons always meet the learning needs of each pupil
  - pitching tasks precisely to ability, especially for the more able
  - increasing the proportion of time in each lesson for pupils' active learning
  - setting subject-specific individual targets and sharing them with pupils, reviewing them regularly
  - ensuring written feedback in pupils' books explains how the pupil can improve.
  
- Strengthen the school's capacity to sustain improvement by enabling those responsible for subjects to take an active role in monitoring, evaluating and leading improvements.