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30 November 2011

Mrs S Evans Mr J Chopping
Headteachers
Daubeney Middle School
Orchard Street
Kempston
Bedford
MK42 7PS

Dear Mrs Evans & Mr Chopping

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Daubeney Middle School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 29 November 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please also thank the pupils that I met.

There have been no significant contextual changes in the school since the last inspection.

As a result of the inspection on 30 June 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 good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

At the time of the last inspection in 2010, attainment was broadly in line with national averages for English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2. By the time these pupils reached Year 8, their attainment in mathematics was above average while in English it was below average. Attainment for pupils who speak English as an additional language was behind that of other pupils.

According to 2011 test results, by the time these pupils reached the end of Year 8, attainment remained at the same levels: in mathematics attainment was above average while in English it was below average. The lower level of attainment in English was due to high-ability pupils not reaching the standards that could be expected of them. Attainment for pupils who speak English as an additional language has improved and, for this group, it has risen to broadly average levels in

September 2010



English and to well above average levels in mathematics. Current data indicate that the attainment of pupils in Key Stage 3 in mathematics remains above average while in English it is steadily improving. My own observations confirm this view. This improvement in English is due to improved and more targeted teaching in Years 6 and 7, improved planning and to developments in writing skills across the school.

The school has done much since the last inspection in response to the recommendations set out in the report. The school improvement plan defines clear priorities relating to these recommendations and the school is working steadily towards meeting its clearly defined success criteria. The monitoring of teaching and learning is focused on evaluating the learning taking place in lessons. These evaluations provide a more accurate picture of the strengths and weaknesses in the learning and teaching. Teachers have also been helped to make better use of assessment and tracking data to guide their planning. Consequently, there are positive signs of improving trends in most areas of the school's work, and it has a stronger capacity for further improvement.

Support for pupils who speak English as an additional language is better organised. All pupils with specific language needs are identified and known to staff. A training programme, highly valued by staff, has improved teachers' awareness and skills in supporting these pupils, with a particular focus on their literacy development. Additional resources, such as the grammar booklets and mathematics dictionaries, are used in classes to good effect.

The quality of teaching and learning has improved. In the best lessons seen, teachers' expectations are high, reflected in planning that caters appropriately for the needs of all abilities in the class. The school's assessment data are used effectively to plan the pitch of lessons, and learning outcomes are framed so that all pupils can learn progressively from their different starting points. Learning plans for students with specific needs are used well by teachers and assistants to inform the best approach to their learning. In the less successful lessons, activities are led too much by the teacher and do not sufficiently challenge the pupils, particular those of higher ability. As a result, learning in these lessons is more limited. The leadership of teaching has been particularly effective in ensuring that all teachers have a clear understanding of what constitutes good learning and this contributes to the high expectations seen in most lessons. Targeted training and coaching programmes for teachers have been set up, informed by the diagnostic monitoring that regularly takes place. Most pupils are aware of their target levels and are given effective advice from their teachers in lessons on how to improve. However, in some lessons, written feedback is not sufficiently precise to guide the next steps in learning, and the comments made are not always followed up.

The school has received some useful support through its School Improvement Partner, who provides an external view of the work of the school. Senior leaders

have received useful support from two other middle schools regarding attainment tracking and timetabling. Local authority consultants have provided coaching for teachers in information and communication technology (ICT) and in mathematics.

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

Trevor Riddiough
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- Drive up standards of attainment by:
 - improving expectations and challenge for all pupils
 - implementing whole-school training on supporting pupils who speak English as an additional language.

- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that data are used more effectively to plan for the needs of individual pupils and that the assessment of work and feedback to pupils is consistent across all classes.

- Improve the monitoring of teaching by focusing lesson observation on the quality of learning taking place rather than the actions of the teacher.