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Mr B Jones
Headteacher
Riverside Community Primary School
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Dear Mr Jones

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Riverside Community Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 22 November 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussion and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. I would also be grateful if you would thank the Chair of the Governing Body and the pupils who took the time to talk with me.

Significant changes to the context of the school have occurred since its last inspection. It has expanded from a two-form to three-form entry this year, so the Reception Year now has three full groups of 30 children. This has resulted in alterations to current room usage and in extensive plans for future site development to accommodate future expansion as the school grows year by year. Several changes in middle leadership have occurred and the nature of middle leaders' roles has altered to give them more management responsibility and to include them in the extended leadership team.

As a result of the inspection on 7 and 8 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 has made satisfactory progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Better teaching and capable management have resulted in steadily improved attainment since the previous inspection report, particularly at Key Stage 1. While

improvement started among younger pupils, it is now feeding up through the school. Progress is accelerating, with a new curriculum initiated earlier this year significantly boosting achievement in reading and writing. From very low starting points, the current Year 2 pupils are on track to achieve broadly average attainment in reading, reading and mathematics by the end of the school year. Good teaching in Key Stage 1 literacy groups showed pupils making accelerated progress in phonics, reading and writing. Many different groups were learning well because of good provision from all the staff involved. All groups were having fun and learning actively, with pupils developing confident, 'can do' attitudes towards English.

Assessment is now accurate and regular. It is used well to create groupings, such as these across the school. Teachers use ongoing assessments accurately to match classwork to pupils' needs in lessons and they are clear about what they need to do to improve. Gaps, such as those between girls' and boys' attainment, are narrowing, with boys and girls showing very similar achievement and attainment in Year 6 this year.

Strong teaching observed in literacy in Year 6 exemplifies the improved provision for the older year groups. Pupils were progressing well, for example in their preparation for writing biographies. This year group is on track to achieve broadly average attainment in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6. This represents an improvement over recent years, when many pupils did not make enough progress from their Year 2 levels. Teaching is more consistently good now, with regular and effective monitoring quickly identifying less successful practice and senior staff initiating support measures to improve it. Staff are becoming usefully self-critical, for example by using videos of their own teaching imaginatively to strengthen areas, such as questioning techniques, which have improved recently. A Year 3 science lesson, for instance, showed pupils learning very effectively from probing questions and from good opportunities to talk together about their answers and ideas.

Senior staff have managed recent absences and changes well and, as a result, minimised potential disruption to pupils' learning. More responsibility for the monitoring and evaluation of teaching has been devolved to middle leaders and the newly extended leadership team is developing well. Pupils are very positive about the school's growth, welcoming the changes it has brought about to their library for instance, now more centrally located and with better resources. Senior leaders have derived great benefit from the support of the new School Improvement Partner, whose help they have found challenging and developmental.

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

Janet Simms
Additional Inspector

Annex

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

- Raise attainment and accelerate progress by:
 - ensuring that teaching is consistently good across the school by July 2011 and for all groups of pupils
 - making more effective use of assessment in the classroom so that all pupils are clear of their next learning steps and are given tasks that really stretch them
 - ensuring all teachers use probing and incisive questioning throughout lessons to provide opportunities for pupils to strengthen their learning.