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2 December 2011

Mrs J Stirland  
Headteacher  
Richard Bonington Primary and Nursery School  
Calverton Road  
Arnold  
Nottingham  
NG5 8FQ

Dear Mrs Stirland

### **Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Richard Bonington Primary and Nursery School**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 1 December 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, several teachers have been on maternity leave but have now returned to the school. The literacy co-ordinator is currently on maternity leave and her role is being covered by the assistant headteacher. One teacher has left the school and a new Early Years Foundation Stage coordinator has been appointed. A higher-level teaching assistant has also been appointed.

As a result of the inspection on 17 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 good progress in making improvements and good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Attainment is rising and pupils' achievement has improved well since the school's last inspection. The unvalidated data from pupils' tests and assessments in 2011 show that attainment in reading, writing and mathematics for different groups of pupils in Year 6 has improved significantly since 2010 and is well above age-related expectations. The attainment of the large majority of pupils in other year groups is at least in line with age-related expectations and pupils are making good and, in some cases, accelerated progress. Inspection evidence indicates that the dip in attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 has been halted and pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is rising.

September 2010



Pupils' achievement is improving because the quality of teaching is improving rapidly. All teaching observed during the inspection was good and pupils made good progress in their learning. Teachers have been given opportunities to observe their colleagues' teaching in order to share and develop good practice, and there are firm plans to extend this further through a 'lesson study' approach. Teachers plan lessons very well, making good use of prior assessment to make sure that learning tasks are demanding yet achievable for all groups of pupils. Pupils are grouped and taught by ability in mathematics and phonics across the school and also in literacy in Year 6. This change was made following the last inspection. School data indicate that grouping pupils in this way is having a positive impact on accelerating pupils' progress. Although teachers plan lessons well, they do not always assess pupils' learning as well as they could as the lesson progresses. This means that some opportunities to re-shape learning tasks are missed. Teachers consistently explain learning objectives to pupils at the start of lessons and most pupils are clear about what learning is expected by the end of the lesson. However, on some occasions, discussions with pupils about learning objectives can be very brief, meaning that opportunities to engage pupils more deeply in the learning process are lost.

The school is successfully raising the standard of pupils' writing. Pupils are aware of the next steps they need to take to improve their writing, following the implementation of individual writing targets. The targets clearly communicate to pupils what must be achieved in order to reach the next level of attainment. Pupils have responded enthusiastically to this initiative and say that it helps them to learn more effectively. Scrutiny of pupils' topic books and the school's curriculum planning indicates that pupils have frequent opportunities to produce extended writing. The quality of teachers' marking and feedback are generally good, although there are some inconsistencies across the school. The profile of writing has been raised throughout the school and a number of attractively presented displays demonstrate samples of extended writing from each year group. These show steady progression as pupils move through the school. The school has worked hard to engage different groups of pupils in improving their writing. For example, boys were identified as an underachieving group and the school has purchased a set of electronic hand-held devices and integrated these into learning activities. All pupils use the devices, but boys, in particular, spoke enthusiastically about them. One boy said, 'It doesn't feel like real work, but it is, and it is always good fun.'

The curriculum has been reviewed, revised and improved well by staff. New curriculum themes cover all subjects and are appealing to pupils. For example, Year 2 pupils spoke excitedly about their 'castles' topic and were proud of the large walk-in display at the back of their classroom. The school's curriculum map highlights the coverage made of all subjects and shows the links between them in each year group. Although the school is in the process of mapping the progressive development of pupils' skills as they move through the school, this does not fully

feed into the curriculum plan. The school has accurately identified this as an area for development ahead of the next inspection.

The central record of suitability checks on staff was scrutinised during the inspection and it meets the current government requirements.

The school have bought in to a local authority support package and have received appropriate support from local authority advisers. The school's good progress since the last inspection, well-structured and appropriate action plans, and the noticeable determination among staff to continue to improve, indicates good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

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 June 2010**

- Raise standards in writing by:
  - expecting more of the quality and quantity of pupils' writing
  - providing more opportunities to write in all subjects.
  
- Establish consistently good learning in all classes by:
  - planning lessons to ensure that tasks are demanding yet achievable for all groups of pupils
  - ensuring that pupils are clear about what learning is expected by the end of the lesson
  - giving teachers the benefit of learning from the outstanding practice in school.
  
- Make the curriculum more interesting and raise standards in literacy and numeracy by making more effective links between subjects.