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Dear Miss Hickling

OFSTED MONITORING OF SCHOOLS WITH NOTICE TO IMPROVE

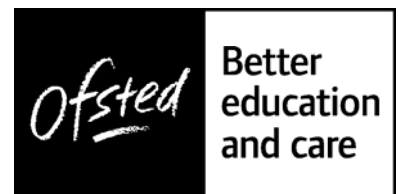
Thank you for welcoming me to your school and for the help and assistance you and your staff gave me when I visited your school on Wednesday 14 June. Thank you also for the time you gave to our telephone conversations and for the helpful information you provided before and during the visit. Please also pass on my particular thanks to the children and staff who met with me and to your chair of governors and the school improvement partner.

Having considered carefully all the evidence presented by the school and the local authority, I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making good progress on the issues identified at the last inspection.

As a result of its inspection in October 2005 the school was asked to look at four matters: raise standards by the end of Key Stage 1 and in Year 3 by improving the quality of teaching in Year 2 and 3; ensure assessment data is used to provide work which is well matched to pupils' needs consistently in all year groups; improve the curriculum so that the key skills and concepts to be taught are clearly identified and progressively developed; and clarify the main purposes of all management roles and how post holders will be held accountable.

Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have improved and are now in line with national averages. Teaching in Years 2 and 3 has improved and is now at least satisfactory with good features. The school has much stronger systems for checking children's progress and these systems are well organised and are understood by staff, pupils and parents.

As a result of the improved checks by teachers, pupils across the school and particularly in Years 2 and 3, are making better progress and the school has convincing evidence to show this.



For example, it is clear from the school's data that many pupils in Year 3 have made very substantial progress this year and the school is now helping pupils make up lost ground and achieve as well as they can.

Regular assessments and analysis of what these show ensure that pupils are placed in the correct groups in classes and that those who require it, receive appropriate support. Recently introduced target setting helps pupils to know exactly what they need to do to improve and pupils clearly value this development. In discussions, pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 could explain how their work is improving and how well they think they have done in the national tests. Teachers make good use of the information from the tests each half term to provide pupils and parents with written and verbal reports on progress.

Standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2 are above the national average. The eight Year 6 pupils are all expected to attain the standard expect for their ages and nearly half are expected to exceed it.

The curriculum has been improved and key skills and concepts identified. A new curriculum plan is in place, ready to be implemented in the autumn term. Teachers are beginning to make creative links between subjects using topics that pupils find interesting and exciting. For example, during the monitoring visit all pupils were actively engaged on activities related to a 'South Africa – creative week'. An African dancer had performed for the whole school adding depth, understanding and enjoyment to the topic. This, in turn, inspired pupils to create their own African masks and dances. A pupil told the inspector that this had been her 'best ever' week at school and that she had found it to be 'the best way to learn'.

The acting headteacher has introduced an effective management structure, supported by specific job descriptions and clear lines of accountability. As a consequence, the monitoring and evaluation of teaching has greatly improved. There are now regular, systematic checks on how well all teachers deliver their lessons. These are well focused on addressing the issues identified in the last inspection. Monitoring information suggests that teaching is for the most part, good and is always at least satisfactory. Outcomes from monitoring are clear, unequivocal and give teachers precise information to improve their teaching.

The school has received strong support from the local authority. Its statement of action is clear and analytical. It appraises all the options and makes well reasoned decisions as how to best support the school, particularly in the absence of the substantive headteacher. The local authority support plan has been incorporated into the school's own action plan.



The school improvement partner has achieved the right balance between support and challenge for the school and has been of particular help to the acting headteacher, enabling her to make significant changes to the quality of teaching and learning, assessment and the curriculum.

With more staff changes planned for the new academic year, the school should maintain its monitoring of teaching and learning in all year groups and continue to develop its work to improve target setting, assessment and the curriculum.

Yours sincerely

Mrs E A Riley