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Mr M Murphy  
The Headteacher  
Rounds Green Primary School  
Brades Road  
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Dear Mr Murphy

### **OFSTED MONITORING OF SCHOOLS WITH NOTICE TO IMPROVE**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I visited your school on Thursday 25 May, for the time you gave to our phone discussions, and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. Please would you also thank, on my behalf, the chair of governors and the pupils for their open and helpful contributions.

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

Progress in raising standards in English, mathematics and science, for which the school was given a Notice to Improve, is satisfactory overall. Writing standards remain well below average and basic weaknesses in spelling, grammar and presentation still constrain pupils' progress in many subjects. The school's post-inspection action plan is based on a clear diagnosis of these weaknesses and actions to bring about improvement have been well focused. Teachers have used intensive strategies to raise pupils' basic understanding of grammar. These, together with educational visits and more interesting visual materials have lifted pupils' enthusiasm for writing and they are now making progress at the nationally expected rate overall. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is regular and supportive but it does not always tell pupils exactly what they need to do to improve further. This is an area for development which is addressed through next year's school improvement plan. Homework is not used consistently enough to encourage pupils to read and write more widely.

In mathematics, good progress has been made in developing pupils' confidence in working with numbers. Lessons are well planned, using some exciting methods to secure pupils' understanding. During the visit, some very

good work was seen by teaching assistants. They, as a result of good training and briefing were able to contribute strongly to the development of pupils' numeracy skills, including those pupils with learning difficulties. The school has an appropriate emphasis on improving pupils' weaker problem solving skills. However, there is limited evidence of pupils applying number to the solution of more practical problems through handling and processing data.

There has not been enough progress yet in raising standards in science. This has had a lower priority than English and mathematics. The school is reshaping its curriculum to incorporate more science teaching in the next academic year and has invested in new resources to support teachers in delivering the subject. The new management responsibility, created specifically for teaching and learning in science is a further signal of the school's intent to make up ground in this area.

Progress in raising attendance has been good. Specific weaknesses, such as patterns of poor attendance, have been clearly identified so that resources can be focused on those areas. Attendance is now approaching the national average.

The school's steady progress has been planned and managed very coherently. The local authority statement of action fits closely with the school's sharply focused action plan. This has ensured that the school has received good support, such as through the Intensifying Support Programme and Educational Welfare Service. The senior managers, governors, staff, and external agencies have kept close checks on the school's performance through observation of teaching and learning in classrooms and increasingly sharp analysis of information from the assessment of pupils. There is a strong team spirit amongst the staff, who are very open in reflecting on the strengths and weaknesses of the school's performance, and who offer each other much mutual support in the drive for improvement. A positive ethos for learning is now well established and provides a sound basis for the school to move forward.

Yours sincerely,

Ian Hodgkinson  
Additional Inspector