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15 June 2006

Ms J Monkhouse
The Acting Headteacher
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School
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Dear Ms Monkhouse

OFSTED MONITORING OF GRADE 3 SCHOOLS

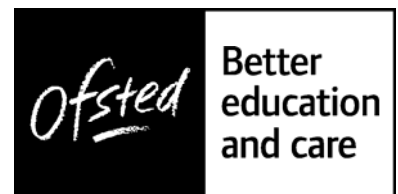
Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I visited your school on 14 June, for the time you gave to our phone discussions, and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. Please pass on my appreciation to everyone who gave their time to speak to me about their work in school and particularly to the pupils.

After the last inspection in February 2006, the school was asked to raise standards, particularly in mathematics and science, and to involve pupils more in understanding their own targets. The school demonstrated good teaching in some lessons and it was asked to use this 'good practice' to improve teaching quality across the school. The school was also asked to ensure that improving attendance was made a high priority.

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 good progress on the issues identified at the last inspection.

The school has made considerable efforts to raise standards in mathematics particularly. Standards observed in lessons are good. The tracking of pupils' progress has been improved and the school is able to clearly identify pockets of underachievement. The extra support which it has put into Years 3 and 4 is having a positive effect. The school is focusing on 'mental strategies' as this has been recognised as an area for improvement. Development of science is an area where not as much progress has been made, but robust systems are now in place ready for implementation in September.

Although mathematical targets are clearly displayed in some classrooms, a significant number of pupils are still not aware of them.



The profile of these targets is not high enough. However, individual targets written in exercise books are very effective. Pupils spoke positively about how useful these are and how much they are helping them to improve their work.

The school has responded very well to improving the quality of teaching across the school and the local authority has provided good guidance and support. Not only has good practice been shared within the school but regular visits by an advanced skills teacher have had a great impact on improving practice. Monitoring of teaching continues to be rigorous and is well documented. Teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards and a variety of well differentiated activities keep pupils well motivated and enthusiastic. A lesson which related well to a real life situation in mathematics promoted learning in a challenging way.

The school is continuing to work hard to tackle the poor attendance of a significant minority of pupils. Outside agencies support the school well, conducting spot checks and leading meetings. The school is also doing all that it can to promote the taking of annual holidays during designated school breaks. There are rewards for pupils with good attendance.

Overall, the school realises that there is still much to do, but it has made a good start to tackling the issues from the previous inspection. This initial success is a firm foundation on which to build further.

Yours sincerely

Glynis Bradley-Peat
Additional Inspector