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Mrs C Taylor
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19 June 2006

Dear Mrs Taylor

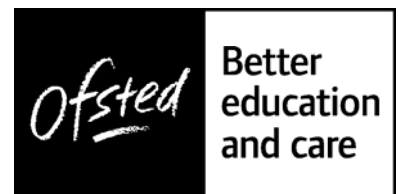
OFSTED MONITORING OF GRADE 3 SCHOOLS

Thank you for the help which you, your staff and governors offered me on the phone and when I visited the school on 14 June. I would particularly like to thank the pupils who were keen to tell me about their school.

As a result of its inspection in November 2005 the school was asked to address three key issues: challenge for, and expectations of, pupils' progress; improving how parents were communicated with and consulted; and developing the monitoring role of governors. Having considered carefully all the evidence presented by the school and the local authority, I can report that the school is making satisfactory progress overall on these issues. However, this judgement, whilst recognising positives in some new initiatives, takes into account that pupils in a number of classes are underachieving.

There have been satisfactory moves to improve the way pupils, particularly the more capable, are challenged to do their best. For example, staff and pupils are much clearer about what is to be learned in each lesson. Teachers have begun to work more closely to develop their planning and set targets for individual pupils to show how work can be improved. These initiatives are starting to improve the overall profile of standards. National Curriculum test results for seven-year-olds rose this year and there are signs that a good proportion of Year 5 pupils are on line for higher than average levels by the end of next year. A whole school focus on writing since the last inspection is working, with clear signs of improvement.

Whilst the school has concentrated on standards, for some pupils insufficient progress is evident from the school's individual pupil tracking records. These include teachers' assessments as well as results of national tests and give a clear picture of pupils' performance over time. The school has not yet made effective use of this information to ensure that all pupils make the progress of which they are capable.



The school is making satisfactory progress in improving its communication with parents. A good initiative has been the setting up of a 'parents' communication group' with a brief to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of newsletters and arrangements for parents' meetings. This group works with the headteacher, feeding back comments and acting as a sounding board for public opinion. Parents report that the staff are approachable and information about day to day events is effective. Last year however, the school did not give parents the statutory information required in the prospectus about its performance compared to schools nationally.

With about a third of the governing body recently appointed, governors are as they put it, 'on a steep learning curve'. They are clearly supportive of the school and want to get to a position where they can ask the right questions to prompt improvement. They have set up arrangements to begin monitoring but this has yet to give them enough information about the quality of learning and pupils' progress. Where monitoring is effective it serves as a good model for governors' further involvement. For example governors 'working' alongside staff in Reception, and being part of the move to become a 'Healthy School', are success stories.

Although there is much still to do, senior leaders have shown a good commitment to making the improvements needed to take the school forward. I wish them well.

Yours sincerely

Mike Burghart AI
Lead Inspector