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Monday 19 June 2006

Miss Jennifer Purchase
The Headteacher
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Winterbourne Earls
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Dear Miss Purchase

OFSTED MONITORING OF GRADE 3 SCHOOLS

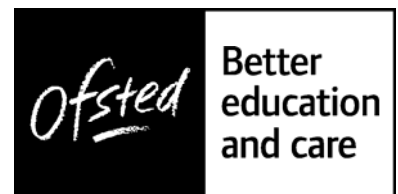
Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I visited your school on 16 June 2006, for the time you gave to our phone discussions, and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. I am also grateful to the local authority (LA) link adviser and the governors' representative for arranging to meet with me.

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.

As a result of its inspection in December 2005 the school was asked to look at three matters: plan work that is more demanding, particularly for more able pupils; provide opportunities for investigation and independent learning in science; and, ensure pupils know how their work can be improved.

The school is beginning to use the analysis of pupil attainment data to track pupils' progress more effectively and also to help plan for improvement. Expectations of what more able pupils can achieve are being raised through sharper target setting and a much greater awareness amongst teachers of the need to challenge these pupils. Early analysis of test results indicates that setting targets is bringing about improvements in pupils' progress.

Planning clearly takes into account the broad range of ability in each class but focuses on what pupils of different abilities will do rather than what they will learn. Teachers have very good knowledge of pupils' individual capabilities but this is not always translated into clear intentions for what pupils are going to learn.



There are significant improvements in the provision for science. The subject leader is developing approaches to learning in science which enable pupils to work collaboratively and independently. Pupils, particularly the older ones, are given a great deal of responsibility in planning and organising their own work. Experiments and other investigative work are being placed at the heart of the science programme. These developments help to provide considerable challenge for more able pupils who are able to control their own learning and explore ideas in depth at an early stage. The school should accelerate this development further and seek to replicate the approach in other curriculum areas.

Steps to improve the quality of feedback to pupils to help them improve their work are being developed but are, as yet, inconsistent. The school has clear and well thought out plans to make further improvements in this area. Subject leaders understand the requirement to ensure pupils know how well they are doing and what steps they need to take to improve the quality of their work. A number of appropriate strategies are being developed and should be implemented as soon as is practicable.

The headteacher has successfully integrated the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection into a coherent whole school improvement plan. In addition, her strong leadership, together with the developing strengths in subject leadership, has moved the school to a position where further significant and sustainable improvements can be implemented. The school is well placed to speed up the rate of improvement. Further action needs to happen quickly to maintain the momentum already gained.

Yours sincerely

Tom Winskill
Her Majesty's Inspector