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Mrs S Soper
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4 December 2006

Dear Mrs Soper

OFSTED MONITORING OF SCHOOLS WITH GRADE 3 INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS OF OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Thank you for the help which you and your staff, chair of governors and pupils gave when I inspected your school on 28 November, for the time you gave to our phone discussions, and for the information which you provided before and during my visit.

As a result of the inspection on 17 October 2005, the school was asked to improve the monitoring of teaching to give it a sharper focus on promoting the best ways to develop learning, to use information from assessment to set targets for pupils and to promote better progress for more able pupils, and to set up a forum to help pupils express their views.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making good progress in addressing the issues for improvement.

Considering each issue raised in the inspection in greater detail.

- Improve the monitoring of teaching to give it a sharper focus on promoting the best ways to develop learning.

Good progress has been made on this issue. A comprehensive programme of monitoring of teaching and learning has been implemented. This is linked to a good quality performance management policy which is understood and accepted by staff and approved by governors. Strategies used to monitor teaching and learning include lesson observation, the scrutiny of pupils' work and the analysis of a range of data. Staff have received training in lesson observation through the school's links with initial teacher training at the University of Plymouth. Joint observations show that their judgements are in

line with those of Ofsted inspectors. Strengths and development points identified are fed back to staff, although judgements linked to the Ofsted Common Inspection Framework are not used. Findings from observation are used well to identify training and development priorities for both the staff as a whole and for the individual teacher. This might be refined further by focusing observations on a particular theme, such as questioning skills or the use of support staff. Teachers are set challenging targets based on a very good analysis of their pupils' progress, which links well to the issue on improving assessment. Teachers report that monitoring has had a good impact on improving teaching and learning.

- Use information from assessment to set targets for pupils and to promote better progress for more able pupils.

Outstanding progress has been made on this issue. The school now analyses data concerning the progress of each pupil from a range of sources. All teachers have access to a readily understood database which alerts them to slow progress using a 'traffic light' system. This is then used well to set challenging, specific targets for pupils which are shared with parents and monitored on a regular basis. Pupils have a good understanding of their targets, for instance a Year 4 pupil immediately said his numeracy target was 'to multiply two-digit numbers'. The targets are used well to identify and challenge more able pupils, for example more able Year 5 mathematicians are now taught with Year 6. Assessment and target setting now link well to the monitoring of teachers' performance. The development of both issues undoubtedly contributed to a significant improvement in test results at the end of Year 6 in 2006, especially at the higher Level 5.

- Set up a forum to help pupils express their views.

Good progress has been made on this issue. There has been a commendable determination to embed an effective school council within the school's ethos. An enthusiastic coordinator has undertaken research into the most effective methods of establishing a council, leading to citizenship lessons to develop pupils' understanding of the function of the council and of the nature and purpose of elections. Elections were held in all classes in October 2006, using a variety of approaches appropriate to pupils' ages. The next planned step is to train council members in their role. Pupils rightly express disappointment that a meeting of the council has yet to take place.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school.

Yours sincerely

Paul Sadler
Additional Inspector