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Mrs Gina Harris  
The Headteacher  
Puriton Primary School  
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23 January 2007

Dear Mrs Harris

### OFSTED MONITORING OF GRADE 3 SCHOOLS

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on Thursday 11 January 2007. During the visit, I saw parts of six lessons, examined pupils' exercise books, scrutinised a range of documentation and data, and held discussions with you, your deputy, the chair of governors and a number of staff and pupils.

As a result of the inspection on September 2005, the school was asked to:

- ensure that the more able pupils are given more challenging work
- ensure that planning for school improvement takes more account of information about pupils' achievement
- develop effective systems for monitoring and evaluating the school's performance.

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

More able pupils are now given more challenging work. In the great majority of classes, planning is now clearly differentiated. As a result, in these classes, pupils are undertaking tasks which they find both challenging and enjoyable. The best teaching includes a range of questions which enable teachers to gauge the understanding of individual pupils whilst challenging their thinking. The school is now ensuring that targets are in place for all pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. Again, these targets are differentiated so they are pitched at varying levels with the aim of stretching all pupils, including the more able. When marking, most teachers refer consistently to individual pupils' targets so pupils know exactly how much progress they have achieved. This good practice is not yet universal. In one class, although pupils were set targets at the beginning of the autumn term, there is no evidence to suggest that progress against them has been assessed.

Gifted and talented pupils are provided with excellent opportunities to undertake enrichment opportunities. In some classrooms, useful 'challenge folders' present gifted and talented and more able pupils with opportunities for time limited high level work during odd moments.

At present, the teaching and assessment of phonics is inconsistent and lacks sharpness. The school has itself identified a number of pupils who are underachieving as a result. Pupils in some classes lack the sustained opportunities they need to improve their writing, and handwriting standards throughout the school are too low, again because the teaching of this skill is inconsistent.

Planning for school improvement now takes more account of pupils' achievements than it did at the time of the last inspection. Teachers undertake end of year reviews of the performance of their class, pinpointing strengths and areas of concern which merit further attention. Common areas of concern are then addressed within the school improvement plan. However, the plan does not contain targets which show expected annual gains for each cohort in reading, writing and mathematics. Governors are, therefore, unable to hold the school effectively to account for its work.

Results for both Year 2 and Year 6 pupils were disappointing in 2006. As a result, many intervention strategies have been put into place to raise pupils' achievement. The school has not yet begun to evaluate systematically the impact of these strategies.

The school has made good progress in developing effective systems for monitoring and evaluating its performance. An assessment schedule is now in place, and is being followed. Class teachers use the information recorded on pupils' test performances to tailor the work they give to, and the targets they set for, pupils. Performance management arrangements, which had fallen into abeyance at the time of the last inspection, are now in place and appropriately include a target for each teacher on improving pupil progress.

Thank you once more for your help during this inspection. In the period before the next full inspection, the school should seek to secure consistency of practice as it continues to address the issues for improvement from the last inspection. I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bradley Simmons." The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Bradley Simmons  
Her Majesty's Inspector