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Miss F Griffey  
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14 December 2006

Dear Miss Griffey

#### OFSTED MONITORING OF GRADE 3 SCHOOLS

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 7 December 2006, for the time you gave to our phone discussions, and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. My particular thanks go to the pupils who represented the school in discussion with me and those staff and governors who made special arrangements to contribute to the inspection.

As a result of the inspection on 21 September 2005, the school was asked to: raise standards in writing, particularly in Years 1 and 2; improve the monitoring of pupils' progress; improve the way in which the school's performance is evaluated; and, improve the provision for Reception children.

I scrutinised pupils' work and documentation and met with the headteacher, the assessment coordinator, teaching staff and a group of pupils. Two lessons or part lessons were observed. 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.

The school has increased the opportunities for pupils to write and enabled them to write for different purposes. Pupils are also helped to prepare for their writing more effectively. As a result, standards of writing are beginning to rise. This was reflected in the Key Stage 1 assessment results for writing which showed improvements in both 2005 and 2006. Test results for Year 3 pupils in 2006 indicated that they made satisfactory progress in writing. In lessons many pupils are making good progress because of well planned activities which stimulate pupils' interest and foster their enjoyment of writing.

The school's monitoring of pupils' performance indicates that they make satisfactory progress, although there are still pockets of underachievement. The school must ensure its continued efforts to improve writing do not detract from raising achievement and standards in other areas. Curriculum and lesson planning should provide an even closer match of activities to the needs of individual pupils so that more may make good progress. Opportunities for writing in different curriculum areas should be extended and made clear in the school's curriculum planning. This includes improving developments in planning for progression in writing from the Foundation Stage.

The school now has an excellent system for tracking pupils' progress. It is comprehensive, clear and manageable. The system is being used effectively as a result of good leadership and management by the assessment coordinator. The information provided helps teachers plan activities which better meet the needs of pupils with different abilities. Action is taken to tackle underachievement where it is identified.

The vastly improved monitoring of pupil performance has helped to deepen the school's knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses. This is being further improved through lesson observations by the headteacher and the effective support of the local authority. Governors and staff monitor all aspects of the school's development effectively by regularly checking the progress of actions identified in the school improvement plan. This document is now clearer about the actions required for improvement. It does not yet link these actions with the school's targets for achievement and standards. In addition, the plan needs to have success criteria clearly stated to enable staff and governors to identify when an objective has been achieved.

Curriculum planning for Reception children has improved and they are able to take part in a range of interesting and enjoyable activities in the classroom. The teacher and the teaching assistant ensure that children's learning is supported and extended effectively in their independent play and whole class activities.

Outdoor provision for Reception children remains inadequate. The children cannot, as a matter of course, choose independent activities which are best suited to take place outside the classroom. Consequently, they still do not experience the full range of activities expected in the Foundation Stage curriculum. The school has considered various options to improve this provision. As yet, no action has been taken, in part due to complexities in trying to incorporate the required improvements in plans to accommodate nearby pre-school provision on the same site. Whilst these plans are laudable, the need to improve the provision for Reception children is a priority.

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

Yours sincerely



Tom Winskill  
Her Majesty's Inspector