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15 February 2007

Mr A Marsh-Ballard  
The Headteacher  
Priestley Primary School  
Prince Charles Drive  
Calne  
Wiltshire SN11 8TG

Dear Mr Marsh-Ballard

#### OFSTED MONITORING OF SCHOOLS WITH NOTICE TO IMPROVE

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on Thursday 1 February 2007, for the time you gave to our phone discussions, and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. I am particularly grateful to your chair of governors for rearranging her schedule in order to meet me.

This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website. Please inform the Regional Inspection Service Provider of any factual inaccuracies within 24 hours of the receipt of this letter.

As a result of the inspection on 20 and 21 June 2006, the school was asked to raise achievement and standards in English, mathematics and science; improve the governance of the school; and develop more consistency in the quality of teaching to ensure all pupils in all classes are fully challenged and progress well.

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.

Standards in Key Stage 2, as shown by the results of national tests in 2006, were broadly average and pupils made satisfactory progress. These improvements were as a result of strategies already in place at the time of the last inspection. Current standards in Key Stage 2 remain broadly average and pupils make satisfactory progress. Improvements in science now enable pupils to undertake more challenging activities. They are required to think much more for themselves and have good opportunities to extend their learning through independent research. Standards in Key Stage 1 were below average in the test results in 2006. Standards in Key Stage 1 have improved and progress is now satisfactory. The school should review its arrangements

for the change between the Foundation Stage and Year 1 so that pupils can build more effectively on their good progress in the Reception class.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Improvement strategies are being used more consistently, leading to satisfactory progress. Assessment is used more effectively to improve lesson planning. Behaviour is managed well and teaching assistants are effectively deployed. The consistent use of learning objectives ensures pupils understand what they are trying to learn. Planning for groups and individuals of different abilities and aptitudes, however, rarely provides the more challenging activities needed for middle and upper ability pupils to make good progress. This needs rapid improvement to accelerate and sustain pupils' progress. Some teaching lacks the necessary pace and sharpness to bring about good progress. A further hindrance to good progress is the poor attitude to learning of some pupils. The school needs to enable more pupils to learn effectively when not under the direct gaze of the teacher.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Excellent procedures for monitoring and tracking pupils' progress enable underachievement to be identified and, in many cases, tackled effectively. The school improvement plan identifies a wide range of improvement strategies. The school needs to decide which of these has the greatest impact on raising achievement and ensure they are rigorously applied. There is a renewed sense of urgency to improve the quality of education. School leaders, governors and the local authority (LA) must ensure the momentum is maintained. School leaders, particularly the headteacher, should not be deflected from the focus on raising standards by the forthcoming building project on the school site. There have been significant changes in staffing, most of which are outside the school's control. The school has managed the changes well. It must ensure any future changes do not hinder the pupils' progress.

The governing body has made great strides forward. It is developing the capacity to provide good governance under the astute leadership of the chair of governors. Governor recruitment and training have improved but a weakness beyond the control of the school is the failure of the LA to fill the existing vacancy for an LA appointed governor. Other aspects of the LA support for the school are good. The work of the advisory headteacher is particularly effective in supporting leadership and management.

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

Yours sincerely



Tom Winskill Her Majesty's Inspector