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Mr N Tuttiett  
The Headteacher  
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Dear Mr Tuttiett

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

Thank you for the help which you, your staff and governors gave when Wiola Hola HMI and I visited your school on 23 January 2007, for the time you gave to our telephone discussions, and for the information which you provided before and during our visit.

As a result of the inspection on 29 June 2006, the school was asked to address three areas for improvement: improve teaching to raise standards in English and mathematics in Years 3, 4 and 5 by making better use of assessment records to plan challenging tasks to ensure that all pupils can do their best; improve marking and the use of targets to identify and share with each pupil what they need to do next; and, ensure all pupils make consistent progress to achieve as well as they can from one year to the next with the development of more rigorous checking of their work.

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. This progress is becoming more rapid as the systems for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress become more securely embedded in the work of the school.

Staff and governors recognise that the judgements of the June 2006 inspection have enabled them to take stock and move forward to the next stage of development. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and gives strong leadership to his staff. He knows the school well and is accurate in his judgements of its effectiveness. Subject coordinators for English and mathematics share his drive to improve standards and are taking an increasingly proactive role in monitoring teaching and pupils' progress. Governors provide good support and challenge to raise achievement.

In 2006, results in English, mathematics and science were above the national average. The number of pupils who reached the expected level in English and mathematics was in line with the school's targets. The target for higher levels was met in mathematics but not in English. Analysis of the results shows that, overall, the pupils made satisfactory progress from their starting points in Year 3. Achievement was very good in science, satisfactory in mathematics, but weaker in English. The school acknowledges that achievement in English and mathematics should be improved and is taking robust action to bring this about.

Although some inconsistencies remain, teaching has improved since the last inspection. The monitoring of teaching and learning is now rigorous. Senior staff have conducted lesson observations and their judgements have been confirmed by the local authority's own monitoring. There are examples of good practice and where there are weaknesses appropriate action is being taken to help teachers improve. The impact of the work on assessment and target setting can be seen in teachers' marking and comments in pupils' books. In lessons, strategies for reinforcing the aims and success criteria are applied consistently. The management of behaviour is sensitive and appropriate.

Marking has improved, although there remain some inconsistencies in practice. Where marking is good, teachers write specific targets for pupils in order to focus their attention on what they need to do to improve. This is beginning to be effective in the drive to raise standards. Pupils know that the comments in their books help them to make progress and should be considered carefully. An effective aspect of the marking policy is pupils' assessment of their own work and that of their partners.

The school's approach to assessment and target setting is much more consistent, and this has been effective in focusing attention on raising achievement. The headteacher has worked very hard to reach this position. However, some planning does not start from what the children can currently do and this can limit progress. The school now has a clear picture of pupils' overall progress and those who need additional support or challenge, although this has not had sufficient time to improve achievement.

The local authority is providing good support to the school. Its statement of action is clear, recognises the existing strengths of the school, and outlines appropriate strategies for areas which require development. The local authority has confidence in the headteacher's ability to take the school forward. It offers a sound balance of effective challenge and support by working in partnership with teachers and monitoring the impact of action taken.

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

Yours sincerely

Robert Pyner  
Her Majesty's Inspector