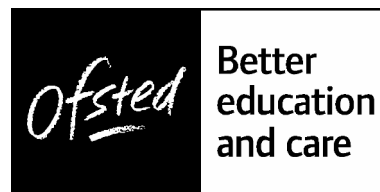


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Mrs S Day
The Headteacher
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2 March 2007

Dear Mrs Day

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 22 February 2007, for the time you gave to our phone discussions, and for the information which you provided during my visit. Please pass on my thanks to the staff, pupils, governors, the local authority adviser and the consultant headteacher for finding the time to meet with 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 28 and 29 June 2006, the school was asked to:

- ensure that all leaders and managers work as a team and are fully committed to implementing the agreed strategies to improve teaching and learning and to raise standards for all pupils
- use assessment information in teachers' planning to provide appropriate work for groups of pupils of different abilities
- ensure that rigorous monitoring procedures are in place to check the impact of improvement measures on pupils' learning.

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. Senior leaders are now working together effectively to improve teaching and learning and to raise standards. There is better teamwork and communication at all levels and a clear sense of common purpose. A team of middle leaders has been established. An external consultant is providing training to develop their roles, responsibilities and leadership skills. Governors are clear about their strategic role and senior leaders provide them with detailed information about provision and the school's progress in addressing its weaknesses. This

enables governors to support the school well and provide it with a very good level of challenge.

Senior leaders recognised that before weaknesses in teachers' use of assessments could be addressed effectively, the school needed a better system of tracking all pupils' term by term progress. This was quickly put in place and teachers received training to improve their assessments of pupils' work against age related expectations. The school now has a clearer picture of pupils' progress and has identified those who need extra support and challenge. Teachers make it clear to pupils what they are expected to learn. They set individual targets for pupils in English and mathematics. However, there are inconsistencies across classes about how well pupils know their targets and in how often these are reviewed. Lesson planning is developing so that work is more often, but as yet not always, matched to the full range of abilities. The school recognises the need to continue to improve the quality of teaching so that pupils' progress and standards improve. Staff are benefiting from regular training and the good support provided by advanced skills teachers and through the local authority's intensive support programme for mathematics.

Monitoring and evaluation of provision is now regular. This has correctly focused on science and mathematics in which standards and pupils' progress are weaker. It has enabled the school to identify the precise weaknesses in teaching and provision and begin to tackle them. At the current time, it is most often senior leaders who analyse data, monitor lessons and teachers' planning, and discuss pupils' learning with them. These responsibilities are due to be extended to the middle leaders once their training is completed. Although lesson observations highlight the strengths and weaknesses in teaching, they do not place enough emphasis on evaluating pupils' learning and progress. Not enough regular attention has been given to reviewing all pupils' finished work so as to build up a picture of their day to day progress and ensure that marking in all classes provides clear feedback about what each pupil needs to do to improve their work.

The local authority has provided the school with very good support. It began by helping senior leaders to develop a clear view of the school's weaknesses, including those relating to its leadership, before helping them to draw up the improvement plan. The local authority continues to provide a very good mix of advice, support, training and challenge to the school. This is helping the school to strengthen the leadership, teaching and capacity for improvement.

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

Yours sincerely

Kathryn Taylor, Additional Inspector