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Mr M J Cassidy
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Cassidy

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Evaluation of the impact of the Primary National Strategy

I am grateful for the hospitality and co-operation shown by you and your staff during my visit on 25 September 2006 to look at work in the Primary National Strategy (PNS).

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the PNS, the visit had a particular focus on continuity and progression for pupils on entry to a new key stage.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our national evaluation and reporting. Published reports are likely to list the names of the contributing institutions, but individual institutions will not be identified in the main text. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of each half-term.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included: interviews with staff and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of two lessons.

The overall effectiveness and impact of the PNS was judged to be satisfactory.

Achievement and standards

Achievement is satisfactory.

- Pupils enter the nursery with standards well below expectations in most areas of learning. They make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 so that by the age of 7, attainment

in mathematics is slightly above that of the local authority (LA), and around the national average.

- Standards in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 are below those of the LA and the national average. Most pupils make satisfactory progress. However, boys' performance in national tests was considerably lower than that of girls.
- The school is now making better use of data and tracking pupils' progress to inform planning and to set curricular targets.

Quality of teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory.

- Strengths included shared learning objectives so that pupils understood the purpose of the lesson, a variety of teaching skills, good quality questioning and partner talk to develop the pupils' understanding. The support provided by the teaching assistants was targeted well.
- In both lessons there were insufficient planned opportunities for pupils to assess their own levels of progress and tasks did not always match the learning needs of the pupils. As a consequence, not all pupils were fully engaged in their work.

Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory.

- Teaching is kept under regular review with written feedback provided for teachers. The school acknowledges the need to focus on assessment for learning and knows that further improvements are required in tailoring the curriculum to the needs of all pupils, involving pupils in assessment, and embedding developments for speaking and listening
- The use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support teaching and learning is a strength. Teachers use interactive whiteboards very effectively.

Leadership and management of the Primary National Strategy

Leadership and management of the strategy are good.

- The senior managers are knowledgeable and well informed. They have gained a good overview of standards throughout the school by observing teaching and undertaking scrutiny of pupils' work.
- There are systems in place for the school to evaluate its own effectiveness and the school has correctly identified the need to focus on assessment for learning.
- Training for staff has helped to improve their subject knowledge and the quality of teaching.

The quality of transition

The management of transition is satisfactory.

- Staff, parents and pupils understand and are involved in the policy and procedures regarding transition. Timetabled meetings take place with secondary school staff to discuss and meet individual pupils.
- Processes for inducting pupils with learning needs, disabilities and those who are vulnerable are good.
- Year 3 pupils say they are enjoying the challenge of being in Key Stage 2.

Inclusion

The provision for inclusion is good.

- The PNS is contributing to the school's inclusion policy. Intervention strategies are modified to cater for the needs of individuals and this enables them to make good progress. Furthermore teachers are making more use of a wider range of strategies to engage and motivate all pupils.
- Teaching assistants provide pupils with effective support during lessons but would benefit from additional training about the PNS.
- Parents are appropriately informed of targets and progress.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- to maintain the focus on assessment for learning in order to raise standards further throughout the school.
- to continue to raise the quality of teaching and its impact on learning.
- to maintain the focus on all transition points throughout the school.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop the Primary National Strategy in the school.

As I explained in my previous letter, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and will be published on Ofsted's website. It will also be available to the team who undertake your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Kekshan Salaria
Her Majesty's Inspector