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Dear Mr Grannan

OFSTED MONITORING OF GRADE 3 SCHOOLS

Thank you for the help that you gave me when I visited your school on 14 March 2007 with my colleague Christopher Schenk HMI. I am particularly grateful to the deputy headteacher, the numeracy coordinator, the chair of governors, and your link adviser for the discussions we had with them. Please pass on my thanks to them and to the rest of the staff and the pupils.

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 7 March 2006, the school was asked to address three areas for improvement.

- Ensure that all pupils achieve as well as they should in mathematics by raising teachers' expectations and ensuring that work is well matched to pupils' different levels of ability.
- Improve the rigour with which strategies to bring about improvements are evaluated to establish the effect on pupils' learning and achievement.
- Ensure that assessment data is analysed systematically to evaluate and ensure consistent progress across subjects, year groups and for boys and girls.

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.

The headteacher and senior staff have used the judgements of the March 2006 inspection to review teaching and learning and to move forward. Governors are fully informed of the progress of the initiatives which have resulted from the inspection and hold the school to account well.

In 2006, results in English and science were above the national average. Mathematics results were lower but still slightly above average. The number of pupils who reached the expected level was in line with the school's target for English but not for mathematics where it was missed by ten percentage points. The targets for higher levels were exceeded in English and mathematics. Analysis of the results shows that, overall, the progress that a significant proportion of pupils made from their starting points in Year 3 was below average. Progress was average in science but significantly below average in English and mathematics. Taken over their time at the school, boys made slightly better progress than girls. The school acknowledges that the pupils could achieve more, particularly in mathematics, to build on their high attainment when they joined the school in Year 3.

Since the inspection, the school has focused clearly on improving the pupils' progress. This has been the key factor in moving forward. Once the shift was made from a focus on attainment to concentrating on progress, the other issues fell into place. The school now has an effective system to measure progress across the core subjects. This is a powerful tool to bring about improvements and to set targets. The data is well used to improve the pupils' progress. The analysis and use of assessment data has improved significantly.

The restructuring of the leadership posts within the school has given clear accountability for the progress of pupils to the year group leaders. Regular reviews of the progress of pupils by year group teams and subject leaders are ensuring that all pupils are challenged appropriately. The evaluation of strategies has also improved significantly.

In mathematics, teachers have raised their expectations and are planning work for individuals and groups of pupils that takes good account of their present levels of attainment and helps them to make better progress. The school has benefited from good support from the local authority through the Primary Leadership Programme to develop the role of the year leader to focus on the progress made by pupils. Progress in mathematics has improved significantly in Years 3 and 4, although the full effects have not yet worked their way through to Years 5 and 6. The school has been successful in developing assessment techniques in literacy that improve learning and progress. It is well placed to apply these techniques to mathematics. In particular, there is a need to ensure that in all classes the marking in mathematics books helps pupils to know what they need to do to improve.

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

Yours sincerely
Robert Pyner
Her Majesty's Inspector