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Mrs Brenda Coupe
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Dear Mrs Coupe

OFSTED MONITORING OF GRADE 3 SCHOOLS

Thank you for the help which you, your staff and pupils gave when I inspected your school on 13 March 2007, for the time you gave to our telephone discussions, and for the information which you provided before and during my visit.

As a result of the inspection on 23 and 24 February 2006, the school was asked to:

- raise standards in English and mathematics by identifying pupils' underachievement and developing teachers' expertise so they understand what pupils need to do to improve
- develop monitoring and evaluation systems that give senior managers a better insight into how to raise standards.

I scrutinised pupils' work and documentation and met with the headteacher, the chair of governors, a number of senior staff, teaching staff and a group of pupils. A number of part lessons were also observed. 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.

Pupils now make good progress in Years 1 and 2. The 2006 results were close to the national average. Particular improvements in the results for writing and mathematics demonstrate that actions taken to raise standards have had a positive impact. Although there has been some improvement in Years 3 and 4, standards are below average. Pupils in these year groups make satisfactory progress but there are still pockets of underachievement. Pupils in all year groups showed good attitudes to learning. Classrooms were calm and orderly.

The school has introduced good systems to assess and track pupils' progress, and to identify underachievement. Teachers identify weaknesses in pupils' understanding and plan activities to overcome these difficulties. The range and variety of work in many lessons does meet pupils' needs well. Occasionally, pupils are not fully challenged. Senior managers have identified where pupils' progress is more variable, helped by the good tracking systems and lesson observations.

Teachers set individual targets for pupils to help them improve their work. Pupils find these targets helpful and motivating. They know what their targets are and understand what they need to do to improve. There is, however, a degree of inconsistency in how well targets are set and used by individual teachers. The school recently introduced a new system for marking pupils' work. Teachers are making good use of this to provide pupils with helpful feedback.

Improved monitoring of pupil performance and more extensive lesson observation are helping to deepen the school's knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses. Senior leaders plan appropriate professional development opportunities for staff and check later that agreed strategies are implemented. The school development plan is an effective working document which focuses sharply on the key issues for the school. There is, however, a need to identify clearer, more measurable outcomes to help staff and governors monitor their success in achieving the plan's aims.

The headteacher has provided good leadership and management to ensure that all of the areas for improvement are being addressed robustly. Governors are now more directly involved in monitoring the work of the school. Much has been achieved in the past twelve months and the school is well placed to continue its improvement over the coming years.

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

Yours sincerely



Chris Russell
Her Majesty's Inspector