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Mrs Y McHale
The Headteacher
Paganel Primary School
Swinford Road
Selly Oak
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Dear Mrs McHale

OFSTED MONITORING OF GRADE 3 SCHOOLS

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 20 March 2007, for the time you gave to our phone discussions, and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. Please pass on my thanks to the teachers who were observed.

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 in late February 2006, the school was asked to:

- Raise standards by ensuring that teaching is matched to pupils' individual needs and that clear guidance is given to pupils on how to improve their work.
- Ensure that all subjects of the curriculum are fully covered with sufficient opportunities for writing and ICT.
- Improve attendance and punctuality by working closely and rigorously with parents and pupils.
- Develop the role of subject leaders so that they are actively involved in driving up standards.

Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making inadequate progress, particularly with regard to addressing the first point for improvement.

Standards are not yet high enough and pupils' progress, particularly in Years 3 to 6, is far too inconsistent. Too many pupils are not making sufficient gains in their reading, writing and mathematical skills. In 2006, standards at the end of Year 6 dropped significantly to be extremely low overall. The school

did not meet its floor targets of 65% of pupils reaching the expected level in English or mathematics by the age of 11. There was also a marked decline in the value added score which led to the school being placed in the bottom 2% of schools nationally. The oldest pupils made inadequate progress between Years 2 and 6. School data also showed that significant numbers of pupils in Years 3 and 5 underachieved. Writing standards in Year 2 were well below average, although there was a rise in attainment from 2005. Attainment in mathematics and reading was below average. There was a slight fall in standards in both subjects. Boys' attainment was extremely low when compared to similar pupils nationally. In contrast, girls' attainment was slightly above girls' performance nationally.

Whole school targets for 2007 are realistic but the oldest pupils will do well to reach them given their current performance. Autumn 2006 data reveals that pupils' progress is too inconsistent and significant numbers of pupils do not make sufficient progress in their basic skills. Pupils' progress is much better in Year 1 and good in the Nursery and Reception (Foundation Stage) classes.

Since the new school opened in September 2004, there has been a significant turnover of staff plus lots of staff absence which has led to a lack of continuity in teaching and learning. In the small number of lessons seen, teaching was satisfactory and pupils made sound progress in achieving the lesson objectives. Whilst planning of lessons is much better, and assessment information is more effectively used to match work to pupils' capabilities, teaching is not yet fully effective in ensuring all pupils make at least satisfactory progress over time. Marking of pupils' writing is helpful and constructive. However, insufficient attention is being paid to improving pupils' spelling, handwriting and presentation skills. A good feature of the teaching is the sharing of objectives at the start of lessons so pupils know what they must learn. Pupils are aware of the targets set for them and the National Curriculum level they are working at.

Satisfactory progress has been made in improving the curriculum, attendance, punctuality and the role of subject leaders. The curriculum is suitably broad and balanced. All National Curriculum subjects are being taught and there are adequate opportunities for developing writing and information and communication technology (ICT) skills. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage has been reorganised, with the adoption of a themed approach to learning which promotes better links between subjects. Provision now enables pupils to make good progress in all areas of learning. The new ICT suite and interactive whiteboard computer technology are being suitably used by staff and pupils. Each class has a week when it can use the ICT suite, however, the weeks are too spaced apart and this means pupils do not have access to the computers on a regular enough basis. The school recognises this and has plans to improve the provision of computers so work done in the suite can be further consolidated in class.

Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. Attendance has improved but remains below average. The leadership is doing all that it can to ensure pupils come to school regularly and on time. There are a small number of non attenders who have an adverse effect on the attendance figures. The parents of those who do not attend are targeted for support, with some success.

Subject leaders are providing adequate leadership but much of their work is in its infancy and has not yet made an impact on raising standards. Leaders are now more accountable for the quality of education provided in their subjects. Monitoring has led to them identifying strengths and weaknesses in provision and there has been some effective work to improve lesson planning and target setting. Leaders contribute to the school improvement plan but, as yet, the plan is not sharp enough. Action to remedy important weaknesses, such as boys' underperformance, is not made sufficiently explicit in the plan. Success criteria do not specify how outcomes will be measured. Senior staff are tracking pupils' attainment and information is being used to set realistic whole school targets. However, the tracking of pupils' progress is not robust enough and performance data is not used effectively enough to ensure support is targeted to where it is most needed.

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

Yours sincerely

David Rzeznik
Her Majesty's Inspector