

1 May 2007

Mrs V Woods
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Woods

OFSTED MONITORING OF SCHOOLS WITH NOTICE TO IMPROVE

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when Jim Bennetts HMI and I inspected your school on 1 May 2007, for the time you gave to our telephone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during our visit. I would be grateful if you would thank governors and pupils on my behalf for their helpful contributions to the inspection.

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 2 October 2006, the school was asked to:

- raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics at Key Stage 1
- tackle the underachievement in writing and mathematics in Key Stage 2 to enable all pupils to achieve as best they can
- ensure that the tracking of pupils' progress is rigorous enough to help in raising standards and to provide a clear picture of achievement.

Having considered all the evidence, we are of the opinion that at this time the school is making good progress in addressing the issues for improvement.

The visit considered overall leadership and management, the impact of procedures that have been introduced to track pupils' progress and raise standards, pupils' current standards of attainment and the progress they are making across the school. The school's self-evaluation of progress across a range of issues was tested and the impact of intervention by the local authority (LA) was explored. Discussions were held with yourself and three

members of the senior leadership team, literacy and numeracy coordinators, the special education needs coordinator, the assessment coordinator, the chair and vice chair of governors, the LA's school effectiveness lead general inspector and groups of pupils from Year 2 and Year 6. Literacy and numeracy lessons were observed in each year group and pupils' work was sampled. In addition, whole-school and subject-specific documentation reports from the LA and data were scrutinised.

Standards at Key Stage 1 have improved since the last inspection, which took place when reading, writing and mathematics standards at the end of Year 2 had fallen to below-average levels. The school had been through a period of unstable staffing which caused considerable disruption to teaching, particularly in the Year 2 class. School leaders have stabilised staffing and are taking effective steps to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Literacy and numeracy lessons observed in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 were at least satisfactory and in some cases good. A good lesson in Year 1 was characterised by very effective use of assessment, activities well matched to pupils' learning needs and stimulating teaching that engaged their interest. In less effective lessons, the teaching did not sufficiently improve the learning of the more able pupils. Most children enter the school with average or above-average skills, knowledge and understanding for their age. Thorough assessment and a well-balanced curriculum in the Reception class enable children to make at least satisfactory progress to achieve or exceed national expectations by the end of the Foundation Stage. Work-sampling indicates that most pupils in Year 2 are currently achieving at or above the expectations for their age.

Standards in literacy and numeracy in Year 6 are above average and similar to those achieved in the 2006 national tests. Throughout Key Stage 2, lessons in literacy and numeracy were at least good and in one case outstanding. Pupils in Year 3 make an effective start in the key stage, with particularly strong progress in literacy. By the end of Year 6, pupils are self-confident and have good general skills in literacy and numeracy which support their learning across the curriculum. Good achievement and consistently good progress are becoming established in all Key Stage 2 classes. However, it is unlikely that improvements will be evident in measures of achievement related to the 2007 national test results. This is partly because of overly high assessment of attainment of the current Year 6 pupils when they were in Year 2 and partly because of disrupted teaching. In the main, teaching challenges pupils with tasks that are not too easy and not too hard. It can be further informed by the tracking and target-setting that are being established.

At the time of the last inspection, systems to record and track pupils' progress and achievement were in the early stages of development. School leaders and all staff are working successfully together to track progress and provide appropriate support for pupils at different ability levels. Pupils who are underachieving are effectively supported through a range of strategies

that are well matched to their learning needs and they are making good progress. Most pupils know their personal learning targets and have a good understanding of how they can improve their work.

Leadership has tackled the issues effectively to bring about improvements in standards and achievement, and develop systems to monitor pupils' progress. Teachers and teaching assistants are working well together to provide good support for pupils who are underachieving and they use the information from pupil tracking to address all pupils' learning needs. Together, they show a shared commitment to bring about further improvement and are well placed to do so. Governors have provided good support and continue to challenge leadership to raise standards and achievement further. The LA is providing effective support to improve the quality of teaching and learning and to moderate the school's assessments of pupils' standards.

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

Yours sincerely

Jean Kendall
Her Majesty's Inspector