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Mrs D Gladwell  
The Headteacher  
St Breock Primary School  
Tremarren Road  
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Cornwall  
PL27 7XL

Dear Mrs Gladwell

#### Ofsted Monitoring of Grade 3 Schools

Thank you for the help which you and your staff, chair of governors and pupils gave when I inspected your school on 22 May 2007, for the time you gave to our phone discussions, and for the information which you provided before and during my visit.

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 4 and 5 May 2006 the school was asked:

- to strengthen self-evaluation and planning for improvement in all aspects of the school's work through better analysis and use of information
- to raise standards in science, especially scientific investigation and enquiry, through better curriculum planning and teaching
- to improve pupils' knowledge of their own learning so they have a better understanding of what they need to do to make progress.

Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making satisfactory progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the pupils' achievements.

Each key issue is addressed in detail below.

The school's monitoring and evaluation procedures are more rigorous than at the time of the last inspection. More effective use is made of available information, and the impact of teaching on pupils' performance is analysed with greater care. These improvements are helping to increase the pace of pupils' learning.

Sound procedures for tracking pupils' progress have been established and the headteacher and assistant headteachers take considerable care to analyse the data. Meetings are held with individual staff to agree which pupils need extra support to catch up. The success of agreed strategies to improve the progress of these targeted pupils is regularly checked by the headteacher and assistant headteachers, and additional help is given when required. As a result of these improvements in tracking, teachers have an increased awareness of what they need to do to accelerate pupils' progress, and of their shared responsibility for raising standards.

The frequency and range of monitoring and evaluation procedures have increased since the last inspection. There is a carefully planned cycle of monitoring which includes regular lesson observations and work scrutiny as well as analysis of data and interviews with teachers. This plan is being soundly implemented and is having a beneficial impact on pupils' learning. For example, a careful study of pupils' writing identified the need to improve particular aspects of spelling. As a result, training was provided for staff and appropriate actions were taken to rectify the weakness. Teachers receive useful feedback following the observation of their lessons. However, whilst this clearly identifies the strengths in their work, opportunities are sometimes missed to provide sufficiently detailed information about how teachers could improve further. Consequently, the impact of lesson observations on teachers' professional development is sometimes restricted.

Strategic planning has improved and is satisfactory. The school has a clear view of its priorities for development and its plans reflect its determination to improve standards in English, mathematics and science. Whilst the plans are helping to secure improvements, the school knows that the success criteria are not always sufficiently challenging.

As a result of improved self-evaluation procedures, the headteacher and senior management team now have a realistic view of the school's performance. However, the governors continue to overestimate the school's effectiveness. This has a negative impact on their ability to act as critical friends to the school.

The profile of science has been raised and the subject receives more prominence in the curriculum. Training has increased teachers' knowledge and helped staff to be more effective, particularly in developing pupils' scientific investigation skills. The science curriculum has improved and pupils have more opportunities for scientific enquiry. The science coordinator has provided useful guidance to help pupils to plan and undertake investigations and this is helping to refine their enquiry skills. In addition, improvements have been made in assessment so that teachers are able to track pupils' progress more securely and to plan the next steps in their learning. These strategies are now beginning to be reflected in improvements in pupils' achievement in science.

The school has been slow to tackle the issue of improving pupils' knowledge of their own learning and their understanding of how to make progress. Recent improvements have not yet embedded and good practice has not been disseminated.

Teachers ensure that pupils know their targets for future learning in English, mathematics and science. However, this practice has been inconsistent until very recently. This means that, whilst the new whole-school system is sound, it is not well embedded and its effectiveness is limited. In some classes, pupils are successfully encouraged to review their own progress but, again, this is not sufficiently widespread. Good practice was observed during the inspection when Year 6 pupils reflected on what they had learned in a previous lesson. The quality of teachers' marking is still variable.. There is some evidence of good marking, but opportunities are often missed to provide pupils with well-focused feedback about how to improve, and mediocre work is sometimes unjustifiably praised.

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

Yours sincerely

David Westall  
Additional Inspector