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Mr A Squires  
The Headteacher  
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Hattern Avenue  
Leicester  
Leicestershire  
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Dear Mr Squires

#### Ofsted Monitoring of Schools with Notice to Improve

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 6 June 2007, for the time you gave to our phone discussions, and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. I am also grateful for the contributions of your chair of governors, the consultant headteacher, the standards inspector and pupils, especially those on the school council.

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 28 and 29 November 2006, the school was asked to: track pupils' progress to ensure that underachievement is identified and addressed; use monitoring and evaluation activities more effectively to focus teaching and learning on the progress of pupils; enable subject coordinators to be more effective in leading improvements and raising standards; and, adopt a consistent approach to marking which provides pupils with clear guidance about how to improve their work.

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. A most significant step forward has been the establishment of regular pupil progress reviews by you and the consultant headteacher with individual teachers. These are providing a good system whereby pupils' progress can be rigorously tracked, underachievement identified, and support programmes put in place. Whilst there is not a lot of evidence of their impact on accelerating pupils' progress, there are some encouraging signs. For example, good progress was made by the targeted group in mathematics in a Year 1 class during the spring term.

The careful analysis of the school's assessment information has enabled you to have a much more accurate view of the school's performance. You are aware, for example, that the provision in Year 4 is poor, resulting in inadequate progress for these pupils. Working with the consultant headteacher and the local authority primary strategy consultants, you have been able to provide good support and monitoring in all classes where the teaching is weaker. However, teachers are not sufficiently held to account if their effectiveness is not improving at a fast enough pace. Not enough opportunities are being taken to share aspects of good practice which exist across the school and particularly in Year 3.

Importantly, the pupil progress reviews provide a good opportunity for discussions with teachers to take place about which aspects of teaching and learning need to be focused on to improve the pupils' progress. The consultant headteacher has provided some thorough training and useful guidance for staff on the features of good teaching and learning. This has been extremely helpful in teachers beginning to evaluate for themselves, the quality of their planning and provision, including the learning environment. There is evidence that this is beginning to have some impact, but inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning remain, which is limiting the progress of pupils as they move up through the school.

The English and mathematics coordinators are only just starting to play a greater role in helping to tackle these inconsistencies in teaching and learning in order to raise standards in their subjects. Whilst they now have a thorough action plan, this was not timetabled, because of greater priorities, to start until this term. Thus, the impact of their work has been limited. However, they have undertaken a wide range of training to give them leadership skills. Some of these, coupled with increased confidence, have already been put to good use in helping colleagues to moderate the assessments of pupils' work and to identify pupils who would benefit from intervention strategies. Both coordinators are now well placed to lead improvements.

Revisions to the marking policy now provide clear guidance to staff about what is expected when pupils' work is marked. Marking is generally thorough and there are some good examples across the school of it being used well to identify the next steps in learning. On some occasions, however, its effectiveness is reduced because it is not always written in child-friendly language or insufficient time is given for pupils to reflect, or act, on the advice. Whilst the majority of the marking is linked to the success criteria of the lesson, there is comparatively little which is linked to pupils' individual targets. This lack of consistency is limiting the understanding by some pupils of how they can improve their work. It means that opportunities are missed to reinforce the targets with pupils so that each child knows what they are.

The local authority is providing good support for the school. In particular, the rigour of the work undertaken as part of the Improving Attainment in Priority Primary Schools and that of the consultant headteacher has been very effective in developing good systems and structures to raise standards and achievement.

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

Yours sincerely

Peter Callow  
Additional Inspector