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Mrs J Berrow
The Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Berrow

Ofsted Monitoring of Schools with Notice to Improve

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when Davinder Dosanjh HMI and I inspected your school on 10 July 2007. I appreciated the time you gave to our telephone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during our visit. Please pass on my thanks to the pupils and staff.

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 11 and 12 December 2006, the school was asked to:

- raise standards and pupils' achievement in English, mathematics and science throughout the school
- improve provision in the Foundation Stage
- ensure more able pupils are sufficiently challenged in all activities that they undertake and that teachers' assessment data is used more rigorously in planning tasks to meet these pupils' needs
- ensure that appropriate links are made in curriculum planning in literacy, numeracy and ICT, and that subject leaders play a more active role in raising standards.

Having considered all the evidence presented by the school and local authority (LA), I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making satisfactory progress overall in addressing the four issues for improvement and in raising the pupils' achievements.

Since the previous inspection, there have been significant changes in the leadership of the school. The new headteacher took up her post in January 2007. The acting deputy headteacher has been absent since the end of January 2007. To provide the

additional capacity required, the LA seconded a senior teacher from a local school to act as the deputy headteacher from March to December 2007. This has meant the headteacher has been able to focus on securing the necessary improvements in order to raise standards and achievement. She has created a positive and calm learning atmosphere and communicates a clear vision for future developments.

Satisfactory progress has been made on the first issue. Although Year 2 teachers' assessments for 2007 show a dip in reading, writing and science, standards have risen in mathematics. School targets were met in writing and exceeded in reading and mathematics. The Year 6 provisional national statutory assessments for 2007 indicate an improvement on the previous year and pupils exceeded their targets in English and mathematics. Science results dipped slightly, but this reflects the fact that the school has not yet focused on improvements in science. The school acknowledges there are not enough pupils reaching the higher levels in any subject. The headteacher and her seconded acting deputy have made good progress in setting up a detailed tracking system to check the rate of progress of both individual and groups of pupils. This data reveals that most pupils are making satisfactory progress overall, but some are making good progress. The school has set challenging targets for pupils from Years 1 to 6 and holds regular pupil progress meetings which enable the senior management team to identify any underachievement and provide appropriate intervention strategies.

Progress on improving Foundation Stage provision is satisfactory. The majority of children are on course to reach national expectations at the end of F2 (Reception) in all areas of learning. There has been a change in staffing and children's learning needs are better catered for by the reorganisation of the Foundation Stage into two discrete age related classes. Planning and assessment have improved and there is an appropriate focus on the six areas of learning. Improved use of the outdoor classroom allows for increased child initiated learning. That said, some teaching is too adult directed and does not allow sufficient time for the development of children's language and thinking skills.

The school has made satisfactory progress to ensure more able pupils are sufficiently challenged. Planning takes account of pupils' differing abilities but there is still more to do to make sure each child is adequately stretched in lessons. In some of the lessons seen teaching was undemanding, which slowed pupils' progress. Teachers are beginning to involve pupils in an assessment of their learning but this at an early stage across the school. The quality of marking varies from class to class and not all teachers are making pupils aware of how they can improve their work. Most pupils know their group targets and National Curriculum levels but they are unsure of what they have to do themselves to move on.

Subject leaders are beginning to play a more active role in raising standards and achievement. The headteacher has clarified their role and communicated an agreed set of responsibilities. The senior management team meets regularly and is developing a sense of accountability. Subject leaders have reviewed planning documents to ensure consistency across the school. They are taking increasing

responsibility for monitoring the standard of work in their subject and valued the recent opportunity to undertake joint lesson observations with LA advisers. They are aware of their need to become more skilled in the analysis and evaluation of achievement data. A sound start has been made to develop appropriate links across the curriculum with a particular emphasis on information and communication technology.

The local authority has provided sound support over a long period of time. This includes additional adviser support, seconded staff, intensifying support programme consultants, advanced skills teachers, and links with successful primary schools. Since the school was given a notice to improve, the LA has supported the school effectively with staffing issues. The seconded acting deputy has made a significant contribution to the school's improvement.

The revised LA statement of action is satisfactory. The monitoring of agreed actions is provided satisfactorily through the link adviser and a monitoring and intervention group. The recent primary evaluative review provided clear and helpful feedback, highlighting key areas for development. The intervention and targeted support plan has been revised recently but it lacks sufficient measurable milestones by which the LA can evaluate progress. That said the success criteria for teaching and learning does have quantifiable targets to measure progress. However, the July target for good or better teaching is 70% and the school has not come close to this figure. There is too much satisfactory teaching and some inadequate teaching. This requires urgent action.

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

Yours sincerely

Linda Rockey
Her Majesty's Inspector