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20 November 2007

Mrs Kathleen Haigh
The Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Haigh

Ofsted monitoring of schools with a Notice to Improve

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 8 November 2007, for the time you gave to our phone discussions, and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. Please convey my thanks to all staff, pupils and governors.

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 23 and 24 January 2007, the school was asked to:

- ensure procedures for checking the quality of teaching are focused on, and effective in, improving the rate of progress for all groups of pupils
- ensure that assessment information is used consistently to plan the work of all pupils in lessons
- ensure that pupils are given regular guidance, through the marking of their work and the targets set, so that they know what to do to improve further
- improve the coordination of the work for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities.

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' achievement.

Since the inspection in January 2007, the number of classes has reduced from six to five. Two teachers have left the school and one has recently been appointed. The school continues to benefit from the effective support of the local authority (LA). The latest results in the 2007 national tests indicate that pupil progress at the end of Key

Stage 2 remains unsatisfactory overall. However, progress in mathematics has accelerated and standards have risen. The proportion of pupils who achieved the higher Level 5 has increased in English, mathematics and science. Standards achieved by pupils in Year 2 in 2007 fell overall. Progress made by pupils improved, but it was not enough to overcome their underachievement when in Year 1. School information and pupils' work indicate that progress is now much better and at least satisfactory overall across the school.

The teaching of English and mathematics has strengthened throughout the school. Subject leaders and the headteacher have made recommendations for improvement which are underpinned by them regularly checking the work of pupils in lessons. Most of these recommendations have been applied in all classrooms. Governors successfully hold the school to account for their work by expecting subject leaders to report progress at governor meetings. Subject leaders have been successful in improving provision, but have not yet been sufficiently focused on the progress of different groups of pupils in lessons.

The effective use of assessment information means that all teachers are now fully aware of the progress being made by their pupils. This has led to improvements in lesson planning and to the quality of teaching and learning in English and mathematics. Lessons are well structured and based on learning objectives and success criteria. Teachers are now much better at pitching work at the correct level for all pupils which is accelerating the rate of progress they make. The school has concentrated on improving English and mathematics lessons. Consequently, the progress made by pupils in science lessons remains slower than it should be because teaching has not improved enough since the inspection.

The guidance given to pupils about how they can improve their work is better than at the time of the last inspection, but there are inconsistencies in provision across the school. In some classes pupils are well aware of the progress they are making and the standards they are achieving. This is because individual targets for improvement are embedded in teaching and learning. In other classes targets are not yet fully embedded so pupils are not sufficiently aware of what they need to do to improve their work'. All work is marked conscientiously. However, the best marking is in English where pupils get good guidance on how they can improve their work in all classes. This is not as consistent in mathematics or science.

Procedures for supporting pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have improved and the revision of the individual education plan form has made it a much more useful working document. Teaching assistants are well trained and pupils benefit from a range of activities in small groups that increase the progress they make. Progress in improving provision could be faster, but the headteacher has insufficient time to devote to this aspect of the school's work because she has concentrated on improving teaching and learning. For this reason the school is still dependent on the support of the local authority. At the time of the inspection some parents were concerned about this aspect of the school's work. The school has not yet done enough to improve its relationship with parents.

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

Yours sincerely

Tim Bristow
Her Majesty's Inspector