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Mrs J Hackney
The Headteacher
Cheadle Primary School
Ashfield Road
Cheadle
Cheshire
SK8 1BB

Dear Mrs Hackney

OFSTED INSPECTIONS OF SCHOOLS UNDER SECTION 8 OF THE EDUCATION ACT 2005

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on Wednesday 27 February 2008, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. Would you please pass on my thanks to the governors, teachers, pupils, and parents to whom I spoke during the day?

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.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school's performance is satisfactory overall, with some good and outstanding features, and it has made good progress in improving its performance. Additionally, the school has good capacity to improve.

Achievement and standards

The results of the national tests at Year 6 in 2007 were low, significantly lower than in recent years. However, the pupils' below average performance in this particular year is fully explained by the higher than average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties in this particular year, and the late entry into that year group of pupils new to the school who also had learning and behaviour difficulties. The indications are that progress in this year group was at least satisfactory and good for some children, although the results achieved by pupils in the tests were nevertheless disappointing.

The areas for improvement identified in the Ofsted inspection of April 2007 concerned the better use of information on pupils' progress and ensuring pupils knew how to improve their work. Significant improvement has been made towards

resolving these issues. In particular, the school is in the process of implementing a rigorous series of checks on pupils' levels of knowledge and understanding in English, mathematics and science. It is using the information to track pupils' progress and to provide extra support when pupils do not make the gains they were expected to make. Also, teachers are increasingly involving pupils in evaluating how well they are learning and what pupils need to do next to reach or to adjust their targets. During the inspection, very effective work of this nature was observed in Year 6.

One of the complaints made to Ofsted concerned the provision for Year 6 pupils in 2007/08, which you, in consultation with your staff and governing body, decided to keep together as one large class. This arrangement is working very well. Pupils in this class are very happy at school and pleased to be together. You have placed them in the largest and most recently refurbished classroom in the school. Pupils of all abilities are taught well by the teacher and full-time teaching assistant, supplemented on occasions by additional help from other staff. The new tracking system indicates that pupils are making good progress and are in line to reach standards in the national tests in 2008 that fully reflect their potential. Some Year 6 pupils are making better than expected progress. Based on observations made, and the school's own data, the indications are that test results will be significantly higher than those in 2007.

There is, therefore, no foundation in the assertion made by complainants that there is a trend of rapidly falling standards, or that the arrangements for pupils in Year 6 are anything other than successful.

Brief visits to other classes during lessons indicated that most pupils are making good progress. The teaching was of at least satisfactory quality and a substantial proportion was good. This picture is fully in line with the school's self-evaluation. The lessons seen generally caught the interest of pupils who were very engaged in their work and keen to explain what they were learning. Pupils have outstandingly good attitudes to their work. They love school and get on very well with their teachers, for whom they have great respect. The pupils' enjoyment of school was clearly exemplified in an uplifting Key Stage 2 assembly, where all pupils joined together in some beautiful singing.

Leadership and management

The leadership and management are good. Parents spoken to during the inspection were full of praise for you and your staff. They valued the approachability you encourage and the commitment of you and the staff to the children. They believe that these account for their children's happiness at school. They have full confidence in the leadership and management, believing decisions are taken in the best interests of the pupils. Evidence from the inspection supports the view of staff and parents that you, as headteacher, have made significant improvements to the ethos of the school. Responsibilities for leadership and management are now shared more effectively so that teachers with leadership and management roles contribute to the strategic development of the school. You are working through a programme to

improve the fabric of this early twentieth-century building and the quality of the classrooms to make them suitable for education in the twenty-first century. There have been setbacks and much is work in progress. However, staff and parents are supportive of what has been achieved.

The governing body operates efficiently and appropriately, although it does not discuss the performance of the school sufficiently in governors' meetings. Key members of the governing body recognise this, including yourself. The governing body provides good support for the school but does not yet provide sufficient challenge. Nevertheless, there is no foundation for the charge that the governing body operates inappropriately or, indeed, that the school is badly managed.

The local authority provides good support for the school through the school's adviser. The local authority's view of the performance of the school matches that of the school itself, that good progress is being made but that overall, performance is satisfactory with some good and better features.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school. I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the chair of governors and the Corporate Director for Children and Young People for Stockport.

Yours sincerely

Brian Padgett
Her Majesty's Inspector