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6 October 2008

Mr M Smith
The Headteacher
Weeth Community School
Holman Avenue
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Dear Mr Smith

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 1 October 2008, for the time you gave to our phone discussions, and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. Please pass on my thanks to those pupils, teaching and support staff who gave up their time to talk to me.

A temporary teacher for Year 3/4 has been appointed for the autumn term to cover a teacher on an exchange programme. The senior leadership team has been restructured since the time of the last inspection and now consists of the headteacher, two assistant headteachers and one senior teacher. One of the assistant headteachers is new to the school and the other two posts have been filled by current 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 21 and 22 January 2008, the school was asked to:

- improve pupils' progress rates in English and mathematics and raise standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6
- improve the quality of teaching and learning, making better use of assessment to identify and provide for pupils' needs
- improve the effectiveness of the roles of the senior management team.

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.

The effect of the instability in staffing experienced by the school in recent years is still apparent in terms of the standards being reached. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 have risen since the time of the last inspection and in English and science are close to the national average, but are below average in mathematics. Teacher assessments show that pupils have made good progress in English and satisfactory progress in science and mathematics. Progress in reading is particularly good and is much better than in writing at Key Stage 2. The school has accurately identified the need to make improvements in achievement in mathematics and writing as a priority for this year. Key Stage 1 pupils' starting points are below average in literacy and mathematics. These pupils are making good progress and standards are rising, although they are still below the expected level (or national average). More able pupils are making good progress in science but are not making as much progress as they should in English and mathematics. Overall, this represents good progress since the last inspection.

Progress in improving the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. As a result of the work of the deputy headteacher appointed immediately after the last inspection, staff now understand how to use assessment data to inform their planning. Consequently, teaching matches pupils' needs more accurately and, as result, the quality of teaching and learning is more consistent across the school. However, these systems are not yet fully embedded into all teachers' day to day practice. Evidence of effective differentiation of work to match pupils' needs was seen in the lessons observed during the inspection. This has resulted in increased progress for the majority of pupils, although those who are more able are not always presented with, and supported to complete, more challenging work.

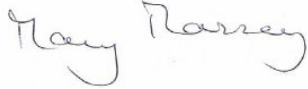
Creating a stable and effective teaching team has taken a considerable time. Amongst the staff there is willingness to embrace the changes required to improve the quality of teaching and learning in order to raise achievement. The staff are working together well and are supported effectively by competent and hard working teaching assistants. A new leadership team has been appointed very recently but their new responsibilities have not been in place long enough to demonstrate a sustainable impact on raising achievement. However, some systems for monitoring and evaluating performance have been in place for some time. For example, regular scrutiny of marking, supported by a rewritten policy, has improved the quality feedback to pupils. Literacy and numeracy coordinators have made a good start in supporting colleagues in developing their skills, but action planning is not sufficiently focused towards easily measured success criteria. The headteacher has shown effective leadership in adapting his management style to match the skills and experience of the subject leaders, providing very clear guidance for some but giving others substantial and appropriate autonomy. Progress in improving the effectiveness of the roles of the senior leadership team is satisfactory.

The impact of the local authority statement of action and action plan has been satisfactory. The support of the local authority since the inspection last January has been good. The authority's support of literacy and numeracy teaching has developed

the skills and increased the confidence of the staff. Very effective support has been provided for the headteacher by the School Improvement Partner.

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

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mary Massey".

Mary Massey
Her Majesty's Inspector