

PROTECT - INSPECTION

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Miss Jackie Burns
Headteacher
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Dear Miss Burns

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 22 January 2009, 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 the many pupils, staff and the LA adviser I spoke to during the day.

Since the previous inspection the deputy headteacher has returned to school after absence and the school is now fully staffed. The post of chair of governors is currently vacant and there are also three other governor vacancies.

As a result of the inspection in May 2008, the school was asked to:

- Raise achievement in Key Stage 2.
- Make lessons more exciting and challenging for all pupils.
- Strengthen the contribution of all staff to the process of school improvement.

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.

Provisional results in the 2008 national tests at Key Stage 2 have remained below average and are similar to those reached in 2007. Nevertheless, the decline in standards which took place in 2007, appears to have been halted and school data, together with the most recent results, indicate a small improvement in pupils' achievement at Key Stage 2. Results in mathematics and in writing improved in 2008 but there is still some way to go to eradicate the legacy of underachievement across all subjects. By contrast, at Key Stage 1 the 2008 assessment results indicate that pupils reach average levels. School tracking data show that, as at the time of the

last inspection, pupils make good progress between the Foundation Stage and Year 2.

The standards reached by current pupils in Years 3 to 6 are beginning to rise and their rate of progress is increasing as a result of the school's clear focus on raising achievement. The school is now making much better use of assessment data to set challenging targets for pupils and to monitor their progress towards them. Class teachers feel much more accountable for the results of their pupils and all have a detailed individual pupil tracker which clearly shows the levels pupils are reaching. Current pupils in Year 6 are on track to reach their targets in English and most should reach the expected levels in mathematics. Additional funding has now been received to help those few who are underachieving to reach their targets. Work in pupils' books is beginning to show an acceleration of progress over time.

The introduction of regular assessments and robust tracking systems has meant that any pupil who is not making the expected progress is swiftly identified. Well targeted intervention strategies are now in place to ensure these pupils get the extra help they need and make up any lost ground. Pupils say how much they appreciate the extra help they are given and that they are now much clearer about the next steps in their learning. Systems for monitoring pupils' progress are relatively new and although they are already having a positive impact, the school recognises the need to ensure that they continue to be used consistently and become routine good practice for all staff.

Standards and achievement are beginning to rise because teaching and learning are improving. The school is aware that satisfactory teaching will not bring about the necessary improvement in standards and is focusing on helping teachers deliver good lessons which are consistently exciting and challenging. The school has ensured that staff have appropriate training, clear performance management targets and constructive feedback on their lessons in order to raise the quality of teaching and learning. In lessons seen teachers were using more varied and interesting resources and making good use of information and communication technology (ICT) to engage pupils' interest so they want to learn. However, in some lessons the learning lacked pace and challenge. The school has reviewed the curriculum and there is now a new emphasis on creative, themed work which the pupils clearly enjoy. Pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy, art and ICT have been well used to produce knowledgeable and very attractively presented work during multi-cultural week.

All staff, but especially senior leaders and managers, are now making a much greater contribution to the process of school improvement so progress in this area has been rapid. Under the consistent and very well focused leadership of the headteacher the roles and responsibilities of staff are very clear. Senior leaders and managers feel accountable for their areas of responsibility and welcome the opportunity to see tasks through successfully. All feel valued and that their opinions are listened to and acted upon. Teaching assistants are deployed well. Consequently

morale is rising as all the staff recognise the contribution they are making to the school's improvement.

The school has had very good support from the local authority in the form of the Monitoring and Intervention Team who, with the headteacher, are very successfully building the capacity of leaders at all levels. Specialist intervention from literacy and numeracy consultants is helping to raise standards in these important areas. The school's Summative Evaluation Group has accurately evaluated the impact of the school's actions and the satisfactory progress being made in following the governors' action plan.

The school is now well placed to improve further.

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

Yours sincerely

Ann Wallis
Additional Inspector