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Mr S Fitzpatrick  
The Headteacher  
Netherfield Primary School  
Chandos Street  
Netherfield  
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Dear Mr Fitzpatrick

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 23 June 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 pupils, staff and the representative of the local authority for the time they gave.

This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Since the last inspection, one member of the teaching staff has left and has been temporarily replaced. The governors have appointed a new headteacher who will take up post following the retirement of the current headteacher at the end of this school year.

As a result of the inspection on 12–13 November 2008, the school was asked to: raise standards in writing by focusing planning, teaching and learning and intervention strategies more urgently on this aspect of the school's work; ensure that those with responsibility for safeguarding children update their own qualifications and lead training for school staff on national requirements; improve the quality of teaching and learning so that more is consistently good or better, in order to raise standards; improve the understanding and use of tracking data so that teachers can monitor the progress that pupils make and intervene where they fall behind.

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 school continues to improve steadily. Although the 2009 end of Key Stage 2 test results have not yet been received, inspection evidence shows that standards are rising and achievement continues to improve. The school's tracking data shows that standards in the current Year 6 are significantly higher than in previous years.

Since the last inspection, the school has implemented many initiatives to raise standards in writing. The school's extended leadership group, established specifically to improve pupils' writing skills, provides good support across the school. Additional targeted booster sessions, greater consistency in the teaching of writing, finer detail in planning and more emphasis on the use of modelled and guided writing have all contributed to improvements made. The school's last round of monitoring of writing lessons indicated that the quality of teaching and learning had improved. Teachers' planning shows that the school is increasing its attention to reinforcing pupils' writing skills through many of the curricular topics. Although standards in writing remain below average, they are beginning to rise, with pupils now making good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Years 5 and 6. However, the rate at which pupils make progress in their writing varies and, in some classes, it is not fast enough for pupils to make up for previous inadequate learning.

The headteacher, two governors and all the staff have now received up to date training in safeguarding. Arrangements for safeguarding currently meet government requirements.

The school's own monitoring shows that the quality of teaching and learning continues to improve. During the inspection, lessons varied from satisfactory to outstanding. Teachers are using the information on pupils' progress more rigorously to match pupils' work to their capabilities. Work undertaken in assessing pupils' levels of attainment is beginning to help teachers become more knowledgeable about evaluating pupils' work. Teachers are planning together and good practice is often shared. Leaders at all levels are continuing to develop their skills of evaluating the quality of teaching and learning and are giving more focused and constructive feedback. Consequently, teachers are becoming more knowledgeable about what helps pupils learn most effectively. Where learning is outstanding, teachers are exceptionally clear about what they want all pupils to learn and this is communicated very effectively to the pupils. However, in some lessons, the learning outcomes are not focused carefully enough and some pupils, especially the more able, do not receive sufficient challenge.

Following work undertaken to improve teachers' and leaders' understanding and use of tracking data, underachieving pupils are now identified earlier and monitored more closely. Several intervention initiatives have been implemented for identified pupils, especially to improve standards in writing. One-to-one support from teachers is sometimes given to pupils as additional pre-school or after-school lessons. Highly skilled teaching assistants provide very effective support for identified pupils within classes.

The local authority has supported the school well and has provided useful guidance in helping the school address the issues from the recent inspection.

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

Yours sincerely

Roy Bowers  
Her Majesty's Inspector