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Mr John Greenway
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Greenway

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 4 November 2009, for the time you gave to our discussions and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. Also, please convey my thanks to the children who were welcoming, thoughtful and polite throughout the inspection.

Considerable changes have been made to the fabric of the school since its previous inspection. Indoor and outdoor spaces have been redesigned to provide a more secure and stimulating learning environment.

As a result of the inspection on 3 October 2008, the school was asked to:

- set work for more-able pupils that challenges them to achieve their very best
- focus leaders' monitoring of teaching on the progress all pupils make in their learning so as to better guide staff in making improvements
- give pupils clear guidance on how they can improve their work.

Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time the school has made good progress in making improvement and good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Data for 2009 yet to be validated show an overall improvement in outcomes for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 and 2. In particular, higher-attaining Year 6 pupils performed much better in national tests as a result of the focus on setting them challenging work and targets. The school's involvement in the 'Making good progress' pilot has developed teachers' understanding of national curriculum levels and the reliability of their assessment. Systems for tracking the progress of individuals and groups of pupils are also more robust. The school's analysis of

current assessment information indicates that pupils in Year 6 are on course to achieve appropriately challenging targets in 2010 with no groups underachieving significantly.

Every pupil is a valued individual. Consequently, a strong sense of belonging prevails and high levels of trust underpin the effectiveness of pupils' personal development. Warm and supportive relationships are central to the school's ethos and to pupils' enjoyment of learning. Pupils say they feel well cared for and safe. The school has made appropriate checks on all adults who work with the pupils and ensures its single central record of such checks is updated at the recommended intervals.

Pupils are considerate and behave well. In lessons they work diligently to complete tasks and comply with expected routines. Observation of teaching and learning in all four classes, including the scrutiny of pupils' work, confirms that pupils are making better progress. The emphasis on strengthening lesson-planning through training, monitoring and collaboration is having a positive impact. There is a closer match between lesson objectives and pupils' needs. A common planning format for use with all classes is yet to be developed. Pupils generally work within age and ability groupings in lessons and targets for improvement are tailored to the needs of these small groups. The school plans to build on this approach by individualising targets further. Lesson observations undertaken by senior leaders have a clearer focus on pupils' progress. Teachers receive constructive feedback and opportunities to share good practice through peer observations are increasing.

The marking policy has been reviewed. Feedback to pupils is more precise and identifies the next learning steps. Alongside this work, the school is rightly prioritising strategies for developing parents' involvement with their children's learning. Some parents have attended sessions which explain when, what and how aspects of learning take place, so they can be more effective in supporting their children's progress.

The restructuring of governance has put improving pupils' achievement at the heart of governors' work. The new clerk to the governors is efficient and ensures that meetings are well organised and productive. Governors are better trained and informed and, therefore, more effectual in challenging and supporting the school. Staff training is helping to develop subject leadership and distribute responsibilities. Performance management is making teachers more accountable for pupils' progress. Senior leaders know the strengths and weaknesses of the school and have identified appropriate priorities for improvement in the school development plan. The appointment of a special educational needs coordinator has increased the capacity of the senior team and has freed the headteacher and enabled him to intensify his strategic focus on raising standards.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jacqueline White
Her Majesty's Inspector