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Mrs Sarah Weldon
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Weldon

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 26 November 2009 and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. Please pass on my thanks to the pupils, teachers, the governors and the local authority for the time they gave to our discussions.

Since the last inspection more pupils have joined the school, and there are now single age classes in all year groups. There have been further changes to the staff team; one teacher left at the end of the summer term and three newly qualified teachers took up post in 2009.

As a result of the inspection on 26 November 2008, the school was asked to:

- raise the quality of teaching, learning and pupils' progress so this is consistently good across the school, and so that more able pupils are always challenged sufficiently
- develop more effective systems to track pupils' progress, ensure that assessment is fully embedded in the school's practice and that the levels assigned to pupils' work and achievements are accurate
- build on the work already started to enable subject leaders to monitor and evaluate work in their subjects and take responsibility for the progress that pupils make
- ensure that governors understand fully their roles and responsibilities, monitor the work of the school and its development effectively and hold the school to account for its achievements.

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



Pupils' achievement, including that of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is satisfactory. Assessment is now more accurate and shows a reliable picture of standards at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils reached broadly average standards in the 2009 assessments of reading, writing and mathematics. Standards reached in the 2009 end of Key Stage 2 tests in English, mathematics and science were also broadly average. Evidence from pupils' workbooks, lesson observations and data held by the school indicates that standards are rising in most year groups, although there is still some variation between classes. The school has begun to use the improved assessment data more effectively to track pupils' progress as they move through the school. As a result teachers are now more aware of the levels pupils should reach in each year group.

Pupils are beginning to make better progress because teaching has improved since the inspection. Although teaching is still satisfactory overall, the proportion that is good or better has increased. In the best lessons teachers make effective use of challenging questions to motivate and engage pupils successfully in their work. Pupils work well together to discuss ideas and act as good resources for each other to consolidate learning or to consider answers. In continuing to improve teaching, the main thrust is developing teachers' skill in using assessment to provide work at the correct level of challenge for all groups of pupils. New approaches to using assessment and tracking pupils' progress are being implemented across the school. However, not all teachers are using them equally effectively yet. Furthermore, the work planned for the more able does not always challenge them sufficiently to enable them to make better progress in their learning. In all lessons observed, pupils' behaviour was good and relationships were very positive.

The scope of monitoring activities undertaken by the leaders of the core subjects of English, mathematics and science has increased since the last inspection. They have begun to analyse data effectively, and have an emerging picture of the strengths and weaknesses within their subject areas. They observe and monitor teaching and provide helpful feedback to staff on strengths and weaknesses in lessons. However, there is insufficient focus on the precise strategies that improve pupils' learning. The result is that good practice is not always shared effectively and less effective teaching is not routinely addressed.

The headteacher provides clear direction and has created a positive climate where staff and governors are responding well to new initiatives and successfully tackling the issues raised in the last inspection. Governors are more confident in their role and increasingly involved in the strategic work of the school. Systems are now in place for governor visits and links to subjects in the curriculum. The school has improved the arrangements for safeguarding; child protection arrangements are secure and updated regularly.

The local authority has provided good support for the school; for example in providing training for governors on their roles and responsibilities. The headteacher has a good grasp of the issues for improvement and a clear and accurate view of



what the school must do to raise pupils' standards and improve their achievement. The changes introduced since the last inspection are laying the foundations for long term improvement to teaching and pupils' achievement. The impact of these changes, although not yet resulting in all pupils making the progress of which they are capable, demonstrates that the school has satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement.

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

Pat Walsh
Her Majesty's Inspector

