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Mr Dominic Magner
Milford Primary School
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Dear Mr Magner

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 24 September 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 and governors that I spoke to.

As a result of the inspection on 18 -19 September 2008, the school was asked to

- Develop a greater consistency of practice across the school so that the level of challenge in the non-core subjects matches that of English, mathematics and science.
- Improve the accuracy and rigour of the systems for checking how well the school is performing in all aspects of its work.
- Take steps as a matter of urgency to resolve the potential hazard presented by having vehicles access the school site where pupils are walking or playing.

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

Since the previous inspection progress has continued to accelerate, particularly in Key Stage 2. Effective procedures for monitoring and evaluating progress have been instrumental in ensuring this continued improvement. This year school assessment information and the unvalidated test results for pupils in Year 6 show that attainment has improved. Standards have risen and are average in English and above average in mathematics and science. The proportion of pupils who reached the higher level 5 in mathematics and science is above average.

Good progress has been made to improve the provision for the foundation subjects. The school has established a comprehensive plan that ensures that all National

Curriculum requirements are met. Teamwork has improved so that now teachers plan foundation subject lessons together which has successfully ensured that all pupils in the same age group have equality of access to the curriculum. Cross-curricular links are now routinely exploited. For example, in a history lesson where pupils were learning about World War 2 they were applying skills they had learnt in English and information and communication technology (ICT) lessons. Facilities for ICT lessons have improved considerably with the establishment of a second computer room. The school has recognised the importance of learning outside the classroom to enrich the curriculum. The school grounds have been improved to provide a very stimulating and interesting learning environment. The school has sensibly identified the skills and talents of its staff so that they can be shared, which has improved the teachers knowledge and understanding of subjects such as music and art. In history and geography lessons work is now being pitched much more accurately to the abilities of the pupils enabling them to make better progress. Pupils report that they really enjoy their topic lessons. However, some report that they could be even more challenging as occasionally they find the activities too easy. In some design and technology lessons the quality of teaching is inconsistent because teachers do not have a strong enough understanding of the design process.

Procedures for checking the work of the school have strengthened. Governance that was judged inadequate at the last inspection has improved. More members of the governing body are now involved in the work of the school. Regular visits take place resulting in governors' greater understanding of teaching and learning and the curriculum. They understand information about pupil's achievement and demonstrate a growing confidence in holding the school to account for its work. Effective procedures to improve teaching and learning have ensured that standards in the key subjects have risen whilst improving considerably the provision for the foundation subjects. The school has maintained good behaviour and attendance is rising. School data shows that in 2008 it was above average. Some inexperienced, but enthusiastic school leaders are ably supported by the headteacher and deputy headteacher so that the impact of their leadership is increasing. For example, they successfully ensure that school agreements about teaching are applied consistently in all lessons.

Following the last inspection the school swiftly made improvements to the school grounds and its health and safety procedures so that at the time of this monitoring inspection all necessary measures to protect pupils from traffic on the school site are in place.

Reports show that the school benefits from the challenge and support received from the regular visits made by the local authority school improvement partner.

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

Tim Bristow

Her Majesty's Inspector

