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Mr Iain Erskine
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Dear Mr Erskine

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools

Thank you for the courteous welcome and for help that you and your staff gave when your school was visited on 10 November 2009. The comprehensive information you provided before and during my visit contributed positively to the process. Please pass on my thanks to the pupils, the staff and the Chair of Governors for their warm welcome. Both you and your senior management team engaged energetically in the process and assisted us fully in coming to our conclusions.

As a result of the inspection on 2-3 October 2008, the school was asked to raise achievement and standards in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1. The report also indicated that the curriculum planning should take pupils' prior learning fully into account so that their learning builds successfully on what they already know and can do. The third area for improvement was to ensure that self evaluations focus on the impact that provision has on learning. This is especially pertinent to new approaches used in teaching,

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.



The school is making satisfactory progress towards improving achievement and attainment in Key Stage 1. The results for 2008 at the end of Key Stage 1 depicted very low figures compared to the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. The school's 2009 unvalidated results for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 demonstrate positive steps forward in all three subjects. Attainment still remains below the national average with writing being the main focus for improvement. Unvalidated Key Stage 2 results show a marked improvement in English, mathematics and science for 2009.

Classroom observations in The Early Years Foundation Stage show that pupils make good progress from very low starting points and enter Key Stage 1 below the national average. Lesson observations in Key Stage 1 demonstrate that pupils make broadly satisfactory progress overall in relation to the overall satisfactory quality of teaching. Where there is a good focus on the quality of learning for individuals, progress is good but this is not always the case. Pupils engage well in learning when the teaching is enthusiastic and there is evidence of differentiation in planning and in the actual lessons. Where time is set aside at the end of lessons to recap on what has been learned, this has a positive impact on pupils and allows the teacher to assimilate information on progress made so that it can inform future planning. Pupils enjoy their work.

The school is highly successful and innovative in its drive towards a developing creative curriculum. The school environment is stimulating with many good quality displays reflecting the areas of learning studied. Satisfactory progress has been made towards improvements in curriculum planning to fully take pupils' prior learning into account, so that their learning builds successfully on what they already know and can do. In some lessons, there is evidence of some good planning that demonstrates a keen focus on the needs of groups of pupils. However, the level of differentiation for individuals to be able to build on their prior learning experiences is not yet consistent within the classes observed. Lesson plans vary in terms of annotations that direct teachers' attention more specifically towards individual needs. There is evidence of planning not including a plenary session at the end of the lesson. Teaching assistants work well with individuals and groups of pupils, giving good levels of support.

Satisfactory progress in making improvements has been made towards ensuring that self-evaluations focus on the impact that provision has on learning. Much good work has been done in Key Stage 2, as witnessed by the 2009 results. Inspection evidence demonstrates that Key Stage 1 requires more support in identifying activities that will build on pupils' prior attainment. The headteacher rightly realises there is more work to be done for the school to be more precise in targeting learning and moving progress up to the grade of good in all year groups.

The school has made satisfactory progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement. There is evidence to indicate the school has focused attention on improving the areas for development outlined in the report and this is supported by a trend of improvement in key areas; notably the end of Key Stage 1

results. The school's self evaluation is broadly accurate and the leaders and managers continue to embed ambition and drive to secure improvement satisfactorily. The essential systems of leadership and management are embedded sufficiently with regular reviews taking place. The leadership and management team works well together and is not dependent on one or two senior leaders. The school is well supported by the local authority who visited on the day of the inspection. The headteacher is pro-active in seeking out support from the local authority and other external agencies that make positive contributions to the overall provision for pupils at this school.

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

George Falconer

Her Majesty's Inspector