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Mrs Rosanne Eckersley
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Dear Mrs Eckersley

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools

Thank you for the help you, your staff and governors gave when I inspected your school on 3 November 2009, for the time you gave to our discussions and for the information you provided before and during my visit. Please would you also pass on my thanks to the group of pupils I spoke with in your office. I am grateful for your explanation of the changes to the school's context since the last section 5 inspection, in particular the disruption that staffing issues have created and how you have worked effectively to remedy this in the last 12 months.

As a result of the inspection on 22–23 September 2008, the school was asked to:

- improve standards and achievement in mathematics, English and science
- develop the role of the new subject leaders so that they effectively contribute to school improvement
- provide more opportunities to equip children to live alongside and with others from different cultural and religious backgrounds in the local and wider community.

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.

Achievement is improving across the school. At Key Stage 1 pupils reached above average standards overall in the 2009 assessments of reading, writing and mathematics, demonstrating improvement. Standards reached in the 2009 end of Key Stage 2 tests in mathematics and science were below average and in English they were broadly average. However, evidence from pupils' workbooks, lesson observations and data held by the school for each year group suggests that standards are rising throughout Key Stage 2 for all groups of pupils after a period of significant disruption to their learning due to several staffing issues which now look to have been resolved.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make satisfactory progress throughout the school. The school has ensured that all staff have implemented an intensive support programme with help from the local authority and the assessing pupils' progress approach to improve teaching and assessment. These factors coupled with a more stable staff group have had a positive impact on pupils' progress recently. However, this has not yet had time to show in test results at the end of Key Stage 2.

The quality of teaching seen during the inspection was satisfactory overall with strong features of teaching observed in most lessons. Teachers' planning is now detailed and usually thorough, although in one or two classes more thought could be put into some of the planned activities to ensure that they meet all pupils' needs more fully. In the best lessons teachers make effective use of the interactive whiteboards 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. Good written and oral feedback is provided for most pupils so they are clear about how to improve their work and how to rectify mistakes. Pupils' progress slows in some lessons because they are not fully involved in activities, especially when the teacher is teaching the whole class together. Consequently, pupils' responses to teachers' questioning are limited or they do not attempt to share their ideas. In all lessons observed, pupils' behaviour was at least good and relationships were highly respectful. Joint lesson observations showed that the headteacher and deputy headteacher have an accurate view of the quality of teaching, learning and progress and the areas that need to improve. The deputy headteacher also provides an excellent role model for other teachers to follow. In her mentoring work with new staff, for example, insightful observations and targets have helped to develop strong practice, higher standards and good progress for pupils in Year 4. Together, these contribute well to the school's better capacity to improve since the last inspection.

Subject leaders now contribute well to school self-evaluation and this provides valuable information for the school development plan. They analyse data effectively and have a clear picture of the strengths and weaknesses within their subject areas. They observe and monitor teaching and learning directly and provide recommendations for staff to work on to improve standards. Most staff have responded well to subject leaders' suggestions but some issues such as the variable

quality of marking have not been fully acted upon at this stage. The impact of subject leaders' work is now evident in the higher proportion of good-quality lessons and in teachers' good subject knowledge. Middle leaders agree that a clear and consistent approach to subject coordination is helping to develop their role further to improve standards. Appropriate monitoring systems are in place to ensure that teachers are held to account for their own performance and also that of the pupils in their classes. The development of leadership at different levels is a key indicator that the school has built better capacity to improve since the last inspection and systems are clearly in place now to challenge and support all staff effectively. Appropriate use is made of links with the local authority to support and challenge staff and to ensure that pupils reach the higher standards of which they are capable.

Senior leaders have brought governors and staff together to analyse the school's context and produce a clear plan for community cohesion. This aims to ensure that pupils are equipped to live alongside others from different cultural and religious backgrounds in the local and wider community. The headteacher's review of the plan checked that initial actions taken by the school have impacted positively upon pupils' knowledge and understanding of different faiths and cultures. Links with other schools in contrasting areas of Salford are planned for this school year to enhance the provision further. Leaders recognise that the community cohesion plan can be made clearer and more focused with explicit success criteria, personnel responsible, clear timescales and costs identified. During the inspection pupils demonstrated a clear understanding of other faiths and cultures and showed respect for pupils' different backgrounds. Pupils enthusiastically raise money for charities to help people in less fortunate communities in different countries. Visitors to the school explain cultural and religious differences to the pupils well.

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

Liam Trippier
Her Majesty's Inspector