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3 December 2009

Mrs B Stevenson
Headteacher
Springfield Primary School
Broomspring Lane
Sheffield
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Dear Mrs Stevenson

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 2 December 2009, for the time you gave to our phone discussion and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. Would you thank the governors and School Improvement Partner that I spoke with, and also thank the pupils I met at lunchtime. They were a great credit to the school and themselves.

The Early Years Foundation Stage leader has changed since the last inspection.

As a result of the inspection on 17–18 September 2008, the school was asked to:

- ensure teachers' marking is consistent in providing the guidance and support pupils' need to achieve
- develop links between different subjects so that they help to improve pupils' abilities to write well at length.

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 works in challenging circumstances and has to contend with very high levels of pupil mobility and a large proportion of pupils who are new to the country and/or who speak little or no English. Nonetheless, the school is having some success in overcoming these barriers to learning, and attainment and achievement are rising.

In 2009, attainment and achievement was significantly below national averages. However, the gap between the schools' performance and national averages is closing. For example, the proportion of pupils making two levels of progress in



English and mathematics increased by 15% and 31% respectively. The percentage of pupils meeting age-related expectations at Key Stage 1 in writing rose also from 32% to 50%. Boys and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities continue to perform least well. However, Somali pupils' achievement improved significantly in 2009. Despite these gains there was slippage elsewhere, particularly in reading and mathematics at Key Stage 1 and science at Key Stage 2, which the school must be mindful of. During the inspection pupils throughout the school were observed making broadly satisfactory progress. The schools robust assessment and monitoring data show more children are working at age-related expectations and that the majority are on track to reach their challenging targets.

Teaching is well planned and clearly focused on maximising pupils' learning. Pupils' positive attitude and behaviour, together with the positive relationships between children and staff support the good climate for learning the school has built. Activities and challenges are geared towards the individual needs of pupils and this is increasing their ability to fully access the curriculum and is boosting their learning. Marking and assessment is more comprehensive and more consistently applied though some inconsistency remains. These improvements have ensured that most pupils are clear about what they are learning, what their targets are, how well they are doing and what their next step should be. To reinforce this, the school is working with parents so that they are better equipped to support their child's learning.

Pupils now have more opportunities to write at length. The school is teaching through a range of themes as well as individual subjects. This helps children to see the links between subjects and also reinforces their understanding. By introducing topics that are more relevant to children, the school is beginning to succeed in firing pupils' imagination and encouraging greater creativity and quality in their writing. The 'Journeys Project' for example, asks them to reflect and write about how they came to end up in Sheffield. By combining these themes with art, drama, music and geography, pupils' interest and enjoyment are captured. They go on to express their ideas through letters, poems and in one class by writing a script for their own play.

Senior leaders are spearheading the school's improvement drive determinedly. They are well supported by committed staff. The impact of their work is reflected in improving outcomes for pupils and the establishment of a more academically driven culture to compliment the schools renowned pastoral care, guidance and support. Despite the progress made to date, the school still has substantial further work to do to raise standards and achievement to a satisfactory level. The local authority supports the school well, with resources, mentoring and training.

This monitoring visit included a check on the school's safeguarding procedures and found them to be secure and meeting current requirements.

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

John Young
Her Majesty's Inspector