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Mr Andrew Board
Acting Headteacher
Tollerton Primary School
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Dear Mr Board

Ofsted monitoring of schools with a notice to improve

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 11 December 2009 and for the information which you provided during my visit. Particular thanks also to the representatives from the local authority and the governing body who each found time to come into school to speak with me.

Since the last inspection there have been several key changes in personnel: the headteacher left the school towards the end of the summer term and was replaced by the acting headteacher; two new teachers, both newly qualified, joined the school in September 2009; and there have been changes within the governing body, including a new chair of governors.

As a result of the inspection on 15 May 2009, the school was asked to address the following issues.

- As a matter of urgency take the necessary steps to ensure the safety of pupils, implementing effective safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures that meet national requirements.
- Ensure that measures to monitor the quality of teaching take sufficient account of the information available on pupils' progress.
- Develop strategies to listen to the voice of parents and to respond more effectively to their views and concerns.

Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making good progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the pupils' achievement.

Results in the most recent national tests and assessments in 2009 indicate that the school has maintained the good achievement in 2008 that was reported in the last inspection. Pupils make good progress to reach standards at the end of Key Stage 2 that are significantly above the national average. Attainment in Key Stage 1 is more broadly average. Evidence from school data and lesson observations also indicates that the quality of learning is good and that pupils make good progress, particularly at the upper end of the school. The pupils' excellent behaviour and positive attitudes to learning make a strong contribution to their progress in lessons.

The school has taken necessary steps to ensure that it meets all statutory regulations with regard to safeguarding, and is developing good practice beyond the minimum requirements. Policies and procedures have been completely reviewed and properly updated so that safeguarding and child protection are given a suitably high priority both in documentation and in practice.

The school's overall effectiveness was judged inadequate at the last inspection because of its failure to meet statutory requirements with regard to safeguarding. Nonetheless, significant work has also been undertaken to address each of the other two priorities for improvement.

- A more rigorous approach has been developed to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and the progress that pupils make in lessons and over time. Procedures for tracking pupil progress are more robust and systematic. Subject leaders have been involved in these developments, so that leadership has been strengthened at all levels. Although it is still early to evaluate the impact of these steps, it is evident that focus on the progress of individual pupils has sharpened lesson planning. Assessment of pupils' learning is generally good, both in lessons and through marking, although the use of individual targets and specific learning outcomes for different groups of pupils in lessons are not sufficiently embedded in classroom practice.
- The acting headteacher has developed a good range of strategies to develop better communication with parents and has also made effective use of existing procedures to ensure that the school seeks and responds to the views of parents.

The local authority (LA) has made amendments to its statement of action to ensure that it is fit for purpose. Since the school was given notice to improve its support has been good. The appointment of the acting headteacher has been central to the school's rapid improvement because he has been able to work in close partnership with colleagues from the LA to coordinate support to meet the particular needs of the school. The acting headteacher's role has helpfully been extended until such time as a substantive appointment can take up post in September 2010. He has been mindful of the need to establish systems that are sustainable and his rigorous approach to school self-evaluation has enabled the school to move forward on different fronts, in addition to the priorities from the last inspection. The governing body values the quality and detail of information that it now receives.

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

Paul Brooker
Her Majesty's Inspector