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Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Swain

Ofsted monitoring of schools with a notice to improve

Thank you for the help which you, your staff and pupils gave when I inspected your school on 4 March 2010 and for the information which you provided during my visit. I am also grateful for the opportunity that I had to talk with a representative from the local authority and the chair of the governing body.

As a result of the inspection on 7 July 2009, the school was asked to:

- improve the quality of teaching and learning by using assessment information more effectively to plan lessons which challenge pupils at all ability levels
- use outcomes from monitoring and evaluation to address weaknesses in teaching and learning
- ensure that pupils are aware of their progress and are given more information about how they can improve further.

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

Since the last inspection senior leaders and staff have focused resolutely on addressing the key areas for improvement. The school's accurate tracking and lesson observations undertaken during the inspection indicate that pupils are now making better progress in their learning. In Year 6, pupils are currently making faster progress, with more of them presently on track to attain the highest levels than was the case in 2009. Nevertheless, while pupil progress is improving overall, there is still some variability across year groups, classes and subjects. The school has rightly identified the need to target provision in Year 2, where rates of progress have been slower. Leaders also recognise the need to improve progress in writing more rapidly



as current levels of attainment across the school remain stubbornly below those in reading and mathematics.

The school's monitoring of the quality of teaching is robust and accurate. As a result of the prompt action taken by senior leaders and external partners, the quality of teaching and learning is improving steadily. Information from regular pupil progress meetings and a better use of ongoing assessment are helping teachers to plan lessons that more consistently meet the needs of pupils of different abilities. Consequently, work is now more suitably challenging, especially for the more able pupils. There is also a greater consistency of approach across year groups and key stages because of joint planning between teachers and relevant ongoing professional development. In lessons, there is a sharper use of learning objectives and 'talk partners' that encourages pupils to reflect on their learning. More active approaches, including the meaningful use of interactive whiteboards and visualisers, are also beginning to embed and this is helping pupils to learn more successfully. However, while the proportion of good teaching is improving steadily, too much remains satisfactory and some is inadequate. The school understands clearly the need to ensure that an even greater proportion of teaching is consistently good.

Pupils are becoming more aware of the progress they are making and are better informed about what they need to do next to improve their learning. Pupils say that teachers regularly give them helpful verbal and written feedback, and this was confirmed by lesson observations and a scrutiny of pupils' books. However, while lesson success criteria are regularly identified by teachers, they are sometimes too general. As a result, they do not always allow pupils to evaluate accurately how well they have achieved in terms of their personal targets. Also, while marking is frequent and consistently provides pupils with guidance about their next steps in learning, there are, as yet, insufficient opportunities for pupils to act on this advice.

Support from external partners has been purposeful and well received. The local authority statement of action, informed by the school's own 'Impact on Making Progress' plan, focuses clearly on those areas that need most urgent attention. The impact of support from advisers, consultants and other external partners can be seen most clearly in the steadily improving quality of teaching. Working closely together, the school, governors and local authority are now sharply focused on ensuring that progress against the key areas for development is more rapid. They are also committed to keeping parents well informed about the improvements that have been made.

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

Chris Wood  
Her Majesty's Inspector

