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Mr Ken Battye
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Dear Mr Battye

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on May 6 2010, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. Please pass on my thanks to the pupils, the Chair of Governors and the local authority representative who attended meetings at very short notice.

Since the last inspection, staff turnover has been high with 18 teachers leaving the school and having to be replaced. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities has risen to above average.

As a result of the inspection on 7–8 May 2008, the school was asked to:

- ensure that systems for tracking pupils' progress are used to set challenging targets and raise achievement and standards in English, mathematics and science
- improve the consistency of teaching and its impact on learning so that it is at least good throughout the school
- complete the review of the curriculum to ensure continuity and progression of knowledge, understanding and skills in all subjects in Key Stages 1 and 2.

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.



Pupils' attainment is steadily rising and this was reflected in the 2009 end of Key Stage 2 national tests. Standards attained by pupils improved on the previous year and were broadly average in English, mathematics and science. The improvement in standards in mathematics and science was significant. Evidence from lesson observations, pupils' work and school data indicate that current standards in Year 6 are not on course to be as high as 2009, but are unlikely to be as low as 2008 when standards in all three core subjects were significantly below average.

In 2009, added-value measures show that pupils' progress from the end of Key Stage 1 to the end of Key Stage 2 has been improving. In the lessons observed, pupils' learning and progress were satisfactory and in a number of classes good. For example, pupils were observed making good progress in Years 1, 4 and 6 because of effective teaching. However, there is still insufficient good teaching across the school to ensure that pupils make good progress all of the time. This situation has not been helped by the high staff turnover.

Although the proportion of good teaching is still not high enough, the quality of teaching has improved over the last 12 months. Through regular lesson observations, senior staff have an accurate understanding about the strengths of teaching and areas for improvement. Classroom relationships are strong and pupils' behaviour is consistently good. Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning and enjoy the interesting activities that they are offered. They work well together in pairs and in group activities. Lessons are well organised and good attention is given to developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. Lessons are less effective when a rapid pace is not maintained. This happens when teachers try and undertake too many activities or excessive time is spent introducing the lesson.

There are good systems in place to track pupils' progress. Senior staff meet with class teachers regularly to review the progress of individuals and groups. Teachers are being held to account for the progress made by pupils. This has been a gradual process since the previous inspection and tracking systems are now fully embedded, especially in reading, writing and mathematics. The rigour of checking pupils' progress and monitoring teachers' lessons enables senior staff to effectively analyse how all aspects of provision are having an impact on pupils' attainment and progress. However, the full impact of these systems is yet to be realised in improving pupils' attainment, although the school is moving in the right direction.

Target setting is challenging and pupils receive personal targets for improvement in English and mathematics. In the best lessons, pupils' targets are referred to regularly and this helps learning become relevant to pupils as well as encouraging them to undertake self-assessment. Parents and carers are now better informed. They receive clear information about their children's progress and the targets they are expected to receive.

Pupils are offered a broad and balanced curriculum across the school. It is well planned and enjoyed by the pupils. The curriculum organisation successfully ensures

that pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills are developed progressively across all subjects and build upon previous learning. The curriculum is also enriched well, especially by a large number and good choice of extra-curricular activities ranging from sports clubs to gardening and cookery. It was good to see so many pupils participating in after-school clubs during the monitoring visit. Despite this, the school recognises the need to adjust the curriculum even further to make it more relevant to the pupils, their local circumstances and their experience.

Good use has been made of the strong support from the local authority to improve teaching and raise standards. Recent improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' attainment demonstrate that the school has a satisfactory capacity to sustain improvement.

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 Kessell
Additional inspector