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Mrs L Proctor
Headteacher
Laycock Primary School
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West Yorkshire
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Dear Mrs Proctor

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 6 July 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 also to the pupils and the Chair and the vice-chair of the Governing Body for meeting with me.

Since the previous inspection, there have been staff changes in Key Stage 1 with a newly qualified teacher appointed in September 2009. A part-time teacher, working with children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, was appointed in January 2010. The new Chair of the Governing Body was elected in the spring term 2010.

As a result of the inspection on 10 and 11 July 2008, the school was asked to

- Raise standards and improve achievement, particularly in Years 3 to 6
- Develop the curriculum to provide more exciting and challenging opportunities for pupils to consolidate and improve their key skills across a range of subjects
- Ensure that all teachers involve pupils in setting individual targets and check that pupils know how to improve their work so that they move forward in their learning more rapidly.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school has made good progress in making improvements and good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.



The school's assessment information shows that the current attainment of Year 6 pupils in English and mathematics at both expected and higher levels is higher than in previous years. For this small cohort, this represents at least satisfactory progress. At Key Stage 1, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics also indicates that the large majority of pupils make good progress given their below average starting points.

This picture of achievement is also reflected in the quality of learning observed in other year groups. In lessons, the quality of teaching is good. Pupils behave well and positive relationships are evident between pupils and adults; effective team work between teachers and teaching assistants contributes well to both pupils' personal and academic outcomes. Key features of the best practice seen included the use of skilful targeted questioning to regularly check pupils' understanding and challenge their thinking and good use of differentiated activities, closely matched to pupils' ability levels. The latter was particularly demonstrated in a numeracy lesson, which included suitably challenging work for pupils in Years 1, 3, 4 and 6.

Pupils enjoy their lessons; objectives are clearly outlined and teachers consistently encourage pupils to do their best to achieve their targets. Pupils report that they understand their curricular targets and are clear about what they are expected to do in English and mathematics to meet these expectations. Individual 'personal' targets are also set to ensure that any previous gaps in pupils' learning are also addressed. Marking of workbooks in a range of subjects is regular, with helpful, developmental comments which clearly indicate what pupils have done well and what they must do to make further progress. Pupils confirm that the 'two stars and a wish' comments and the 'pink and green' marking support their learning and help them to understand how they can improve further.

The school has maintained a broad range of curriculum experiences for pupils, while providing a strong focus on improving levels of literacy and numeracy. There is a coherent approach to curriculum development with topics which include enrichment activities and links between subjects evident. Pupils value the opportunities to use the improved resources, including web books and laptops, to develop further their information and communication technology skills in lessons. The weekly enrichment afternoon allows pupils the opportunity to sample a range of activities, including cookery, weaving and music technology; in these practical sessions, pupils work enthusiastically and cooperatively in mixed-age groups with teaching assistants and the learning mentor.

The headteacher and assistant headteacher work effectively as a team and are clearly focused on improving pupils' academic and personal outcomes. Regular monitoring, including lesson observations, learning walks and the scrutiny of workbooks and planning is enabling the school to gain an accurate view of the

quality of provision. Key priorities and actions are suitably identified in the school development plan.

Pupils' academic progress is carefully tracked and 'pupil progress' meetings ensure that the school is able to focus sharply on the rate of learning for each pupil and identify and support those pupils at risk of underachieving. Senior leaders are aware there is still more to do to secure fully improvements in pupils' achievement. However, improvements in the quality of teaching and developments in assessment and target setting since the previous inspection demonstrate the school's developing capacity.

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

Angela Headon
Her Majesty's Inspector