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Friday 11 June 2010

Mr Brian Allsopp
Granby Junior School
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Dear Mr Allsopp

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on Thursday 10 June 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 staff and chair of governors for their time and courtesy. I would like to particularly thank the pupils for the enjoyable time I spent talking with them.

Since the school's last inspection, there have been no significant contextual changes.

As a result of the inspection on 26-27 June 2008, the school was asked to:

- raise achievement by setting more challenging targets and ensuring that assessment data are collected more often and shared more widely
- take additional steps to increase consistency in teaching, so that the strong pace and high challenge in the best lessons become standard practice
- give coordinators a central role in setting and meeting whole-school targets in their subjects
- use teaching time more efficiently, especially in morning sessions.

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

The key factor in the judgement of inadequate progress is that overall achievement and progress have declined over the last three years. Although test results at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2009 indicated considerable improvement in English from the previous year when they had fallen sharply, they remained significantly below the national average. Similarly, test results in mathematics were significantly below the national average and the lowest for five years. Given the broadly average starting point of those pupils, this represented inadequate progress. Standards remain low



and in lessons observed jointly with senior leaders, some pupils continue to make inadequate progress.

Inadequate progress has been made with improving consistency in the quality of teaching. In the six lessons observed, it ranged from inadequate to satisfactory. Learning objectives are often a description of activities rather than a focus on what the pupils are expected to learn by the end of the lesson. Planning is not sufficiently guided by pupils' targets or latest assessment information. Consequently, activities are not well matched to pupils' varying needs. Despite this, pupils behave well in lessons. The pace of learning is not brisk enough and teachers' expectations are not high enough to enable more rapid and sustained progress to be made. In discussion with pupils, many said that they would like their lessons to be more interesting and challenging. Teaching assistants are generally deployed well but some are too passive during whole-class teaching. The school has successfully re-structured the morning sessions to ensure that more effective use is made of teaching time. For example, pupils talk enthusiastically about their new guided reading sessions and demonstrate a greater confidence and enjoyment of reading.

Recently introduced assessment procedures are not yet being used effectively to aid planning or to provide pupils with clear targets for improvement. Marking in books lacks detail and does not provide pupils with a clear indication of what they have achieved and what they need to do next. Systems to monitor and track pupils' progress lack the necessary rigour to ensure that all groups of pupils make the progress that they could.

The school has extended the role of subject leaders and they have recently begun to monitor planning, teaching and pupils' work. However, the work of senior leaders is sometimes hindered because not all teachers cooperate by taking on board the recommendations. As a result, some teaching remains inadequate and some pupils continue to underperform.

The school has not fully addressed the key issues identified in its last inspection report and there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate its capacity for sustained improvement. Processes are not rigorous enough to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching effectively. Actions to strengthen the quality teaching are not sufficiently robust to ensure that pupils make sufficiently good progress to eradicate previous underachievement. The senior management team and staff do not cooperate and collaborate effectively enough to develop and rigorously implement the assessment, marking and tracking policies.

The support received from the local authority has not been sufficiently focused to have impacted on enabling the school to make the improvements that are urgently required. However, the work of the new School Improvement Partner since September 2009, demonstrates that he has quickly become very familiar with the issues and has an accurate understanding of what needs to be done to secure the necessary improvements.



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

Dorothy Bathgate

Her Majesty's Inspector

