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Mrs Rebecca Mayfield
Tattershall Primary School
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Dear Mrs Mayfield

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 23 February 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 and governors with whom I met and to your school improvement partner. Since the school was last inspected, one teacher has left the school and one has joined.

As a result of the inspection on 17 March 2008, the school was asked to raise standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science; improve the quality of teaching to increase the challenge for more able pupils; and improve the tracking of pupils' progress to monitor groups, including more able pupils.

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.

The school's work to raise standards is beginning to pay off, particularly in reading and science. After a significantly improved performance in the 2008 national tests for pupils in Year 6, English results rose again in 2009 and the proportion reaching the expected Level 4 in science was close to the national average. Standards in writing and mathematics are proving harder to shift: the results fell in 2009 and pupils' attainment remains too low. Nevertheless, pupils currently in Year 6 are on track to reach higher standards than those previously seen, and Year 5 pupils are well placed to continue that improvement. Pupils' work in lessons and in their books, together with the school's records of their progress, show that a greater proportion are working at the levels expected of their age than was previously the case. As a result of this improvement, pupils' achievement is rising and, from low starting points, their progress is accelerating. This is reflected in the value-added scores for Year 6 pupils in 2009, which were the school's highest to date and were broadly in line with the



national average. However, the school rightly recognises that pupils' improving performance is not seen consistently in all classes, and there are still too few pupils reaching the higher levels.

Pupils' improving performance is as a direct result of better teaching and the sharper tracking of their progress. Staff have worked successfully to improve their awareness of pupils' learning during lessons. They question well and use pupils' responses appropriately to gauge their understanding and set the next steps in their learning. Teachers provide pupils with a better understanding of what they are expected to learn during the lesson and give them helpful pointers for judging their success (known to the pupils as 'steps to success'). As a result, pupils are increasingly engaged in evaluating their learning and that of their classmates. Some inconsistencies remain, however, particularly in the level of challenge provided for more able pupils, which is not always precise enough to take account of these pupils' higher starting points. Teachers' marking has improved, and their comments usually help pupils understand how well they have done and how they can improve. Occasionally, these comments are either too vague or too broad to tell pupils precisely what they need to do. The tracking of pupils' progress has improved because the systems have been modified so that they are less unwieldy. The information now available provides a clearer picture of how individuals and groups of pupils are doing, including more able pupils and the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This information is used increasingly well to identify those pupils making slower than expected progress and to target additional support to give them a boost.

Senior staff have focused on the most important ways of improving teaching and learning and raising standards. The proportion of good teaching has increased and this is helping to ensure that pupils' progress accelerates, although there is not yet enough good teaching to secure consistently good progress. Pupils' behaviour is improving, so that lessons run smoothly and pupils are ready to learn. Leaders evaluate their work realistically, recognise where they have been successful and understand where more improvement is needed. Staff are unified in their commitment to improving the school, and effective support from the local authority continues to help the school to build its capacity for sustained 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

Keith Williams
Additional Inspector

