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05 March 2010

Mr Rob Taylor
Headteacher
Barlby Community Primary School
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Dear Mr Taylor

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools

Thank you for the help you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 04 March 2010, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information you provided before and during my visit. Please also pass on my thanks to the Chair of Governors, pupils and staff who gave up some of their time to meet with me.

As a result of the inspection on 22–23 April 2008, the school was asked to do the following.

- Raise writing standards in Key Stage 1, ensuring that pupils develop writing skills by systematically building on what they know and understand.
- Make the Key Stage 1 curriculum more active, purposeful and exciting so pupils have many different opportunities to practise their literacy and other skills in lots of different subjects.
- Ensure that pupils in every class have sufficient time to learn independently.
- Ensure that subject and key stage leaders make more effective use of tracking systems to raise pupils' achievement.

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.

In 2009 attainment at Key Stage 1 fell to below the national averages. An analysis of school-held data combined with evidence gained from lesson observations and a scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that the majority of pupils are now making better progress, particularly in writing. By the end of Year 6 attainment is broadly in line

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with that expected for their age with pupils making at least satisfactory and, in some cases, good progress. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 in English in 2009 was significantly greater than the national average.

There are a number of features evident in the quality of teaching and learning in many classes that are influencing the improving rate of pupils' progress as they move through the school. These include good relationships between pupils and adults, focused questioning and carefully planned activities that involve pupils in their learning and make learning enjoyable. These activities, which incorporate a good balance of collaborative and independent work, also provide opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. However, pupils are making better progress towards the end of each key stage because here the teaching is challenging and expectations are high. It is clear from lesson observations, a scrutiny of pupils' writing and the school's own monitoring records that this quality of provision is not consistent as pupils move from year to year. As a result, the systematic development of skills, building on what pupils know, is not as embedded in the curriculum as it should be. Therefore, pupils' progress is uneven and this has an impact on attainment.

The school has successfully established effective tracking systems to monitor pupils' progress. This represents a significant development since the previous inspection and is helping to identify where support is necessary to enhance progress. Recent changes to the coordination of literacy and the leadership of Key Stage 1 bode well for the future. A good understanding exists of where weaknesses lie in teaching and learning and what needs to be done to address them. Plans are in place to raise attainment further but they lack clear measurable success criteria that relate to pupils' performance. The headteacher has successfully established a positive climate for learning where staff feel they belong and pupils are at the heart of the school. Important as it is, this has taken priority but it has also taken too long. However, both the headteacher and the governing body acknowledge this and both are conscious that increased attention needs to be given to securing high levels of attainment without delay. The governing body is increasingly holding the school to account at every level and this is a key factor in determining the capacity to sustain further improvement. The local authority continues to monitor the work of the school closely.

This monitoring visit included a check on the school's safeguarding procedures by scrutinising the single central record and found this to be secure.

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

Christopher Keeler
Her Majesty's Inspector

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