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16 December 2009

Mrs Lyndsay Baldock  
Headteacher  
Quay Primary School  
Oxford Street  
Bridlington  
YO16 4LB

Dear Mrs Baldock

#### Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 15 December 2009 and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. I should also like to offer my thanks for the time you and senior colleagues gave to discussing aspects of the school's development, and to members of staff and those pupils who also gave time for discussions about the work of the school.

Since its previous inspection in January 2008, the school has undergone considerable disruption to its normal routines owing to serious behaviour problems in last year's Year 6 group. High pupil mobility contributed to this situation, which required extensive and sustained attention from senior managers to ensure that disruption to the learning of other pupils was minimised. The problems were significant and resulted in a high number of exclusions, the first in the school for many years. This year group has now moved on to secondary schools.

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

- ensure that lower ability pupils, including those on the school's register of special educational needs, achieve as well as they can
- strengthen the quality of teaching by improving the quality of planning and the tracking of progress so that every pupil's needs are met
- strengthen the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning so that suitably challenging targets for improvement are set and achieved.

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.

Results in national tests in 2009 reflected the impact of the turbulence described above. They were very low compared with national averages in English, mathematics and science and lower than in previous years. The performance of lower ability pupils and those on the register of special educational needs, indicated that these groups of pupils had performed significantly less well than their peers and that they had not made enough progress from their starting points in Year 3. The headteacher and senior leaders have reviewed provision for these groups of pupils and have introduced a number of new interventions and class groupings to support better progress in their basic skills. These actions are beginning to bear fruit in some classes although it is too early for this to demonstrate securely that the school is showing increased capacity to improve. For example, lower ability pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, in Year 6 are taught in a discrete group by an effective teacher who plans well for their specific needs. It is clear from the work in their books that these pupils have improved their progress this term. Though many are still working well below the level expected for their age, they are now beginning to make up lost ground and are moving more securely towards higher standards. For other pupils, there is evidence that the interventions designed to improve basic skills are beginning to work, for example, in improving spelling strategies and word recognition. However, these improvements are not being consolidated sufficiently in all classes because teachers are not consistently planning to give pupils regular opportunities to practise their new learning. As a result, much of the impact of the interventions is lost because new skills are not reinforced enough in all classes.

While the school has taken effective action this term to improve the tracking of pupil progress this is not yet impacting on teachers' use of assessment in lesson planning. A comprehensive system of evidence gathering has been established which links with teachers' performance targets and makes them accountable for the progress of pupils in their class. The assessment leader quickly identified where staff assessments were inaccurate and has acted promptly to develop systems to improve this aspect. The result is that the school has an increasingly accurate picture of pupils' attainment and their rates of progress. Senior managers are gaining a clearer picture of pupils' attainment and progress across the school and are able to spot underachievement more quickly than in the past. However, this information is not yet feeding into teachers' lesson planning consistently enough.

The special educational needs coordinator has implemented a wide range of interventions and support programmes to target the differing needs of pupils who are at most risk of underachieving. Some of these are having the intended impact of raising the attainment of these pupils and increasing their rates of progress, but there has not been enough regular monitoring of the outcomes for these pupils this term for the school to determine what is working well and what is not. Sharp, first hand information about the small steps of progress these pupils are making is not being gathered regularly enough and fed back to class teachers. This means that teachers are not always aware of precisely what new skills they should be

encouraging these pupils to use in whole class lessons. As a result, the progress of these pupils has slowed from the time of the previous inspection. The special educational needs co-ordinator recognises that current evaluation procedures are not sufficiently robust and has more regular evaluations planned for next term.

During the last school year, because of the urgent need to bring behaviour under control, there was little formal monitoring of teaching and learning, including that of teachers' planning for lessons. This placed senior leaders out of touch with the quality of teaching in the school and with too little detail of where learning is not as effective as it needs to be. While the headteacher has a broadly accurate picture of the quality of teaching in different classes, the school has not used a wide enough range of monitoring activities since the last inspection to gather as full a picture as possible of what promotes good learning for all groups of pupils, and which strategies are least effective. This has had a negative effect upon leaders' ability to pinpoint precisely what needs to be done to improve performance and take the actions required to achieve this. In addition, the lack of regular scrutiny of teachers' planning for literacy and numeracy has led to some inconsistencies in how well teachers plan for different abilities and to some lesson planning which is cursory and not detailed enough to cover the needs of all pupils in the class. This has led to the school failing to make the improvements to planning and achievement required by the previous inspection. Whilst there are several examples of good planning, based on a thorough knowledge of the pupils' needs and clearly based on an understanding of what learning styles suit them best, this good practice has not been identified by school leaders and spread throughout the school. There are some early signs that this situation is improving. For example, where the headteacher has deployed senior staff to monitor and support planning, for example, that of recently appointed staff, there is a clear picture of developing good practice and a sharing of what works well for particular age groups. However, while the school has developed this appropriate model for the monitoring of teaching and learning, this has not been either regular or rigorous enough since the previous inspection to lead to consistency of practice or to the sharing of good practice for the benefit of all pupils.

While the headteacher and senior staff directed their efforts to ensuring a safe and secure learning environment in the last school year, there is no doubt that this reduced their capacity to drive forward improvement in the school. The start of this school year has seen the school back on course tackling the issues from the previous inspection. While developments this term are providing a stronger base for improvement, their impact is as yet unproven.

The monitoring visit included a check on the school's safeguarding procedures and found them to be secure and meeting current requirements. It also noted that the local authority has been challenging the school over the recent decline in performance and has offered tailored support to help it overcome the impact of poor behaviour and its consequences upon school improvement in the last year.

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

Moira Fitzpatrick  
Additional Inspector