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Ms G Franks
New Oak Primary School
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Dear Ms Franks

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 11 May 2010, for the time you gave to our discussions and for the information which you provided. Please thank the Chair of Governors, the local authority officer and Year 6 pupils who came to talk to me.

Since the last inspection, there have been changes of headteacher, with an interim headteacher in place last year. You took up the substantive post in September 2009. The temporary decline in pupil numbers has now been reversed. The school has an increasing number of transient pupils who start and leave at non-standard times and a higher number who are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with statements for special educational needs is high; this is partly due to the integral unit in the school for hearing impaired pupils. The number of pupils from diverse ethnic backgrounds has also risen substantially.

As a result of the inspection on 11 and 12 June 2008, the school was asked to:

- raise standards by ensuring the quality of teaching in all classes matches the best in the school
- improve the curriculum balance by providing more time for subjects other than English and mathematics
- ensure all teachers use performance data more effectively to help pupils improve.

Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion that the school has made:

satisfactory progress in making improvements and

good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

The school ensures all pupils are included and welcomed. Pupils make at least satisfactory and often good progress from their starting points, including those with hearing impairments. The overall average attainment scores in English and mathematics are still below the national average but this masks numerous individual success stories. This is especially the case for highly vulnerable pupils and those who rapidly learn English after arrival. The school works effectively with partner primary schools to ensure pupils facing difficulties are offered a place, even if this potentially depresses average test scores. Pupils in your school are now given a good chance to succeed across both academic subjects and the wider curriculum, including healthier living. Pupils are keen cyclists and are aware of the related safety issues. They are kept safe and enjoy increased opportunities to join sports and garden/environmental clubs. The re-started breakfast club is also thriving.

The quality of teaching and learning is more consistent with teachers, especially in Key Stage 2, planning meticulous lessons that offer work at numerous levels to suit the needs of their very diverse learners. Lessons are active and well paced so learning is rapid. Pupils with statements of special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported in class and in social times. Behaviour after a dip last year is once again good. Pupils appreciate the new positive approach to behaviour management adopted by all staff. The Early Years Foundation Stage, although not a focus of this inspection, continues to give pupils an early boost in their learning. In order for pupils to continue catching up to their peers nationally, it is essential that this early enthusiasm for learning is systematically nurtured in Key Stage 1. The new class arrangements for Years 1 and 2, while potentially helpful in raising standards, require close monitoring to ensure all plans and activities fully promote exploration and independent thinking. All classes are well managed.

The local authority has given the school good support. Regular reviews of the school's progress have had a good impact. Workforce reform is incomplete due to the changes in headship and remains a priority. As headteacher, you successfully encourage staff to find imaginative ways to raise attainment further and to enthuse and motivate pupils. Staff are now all familiar with the use of pupils' performance data to help them and the recent focus on improving mathematics has enhanced pupils' confidence. They are proud of gaining their badges as they complete the specially designed mathematics booklets. Such initiatives demonstrate that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

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

Mo Roberts
Her Majesty's Inspector

