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Mr Andrew Everett  
Headteacher  
Baschurch CofE Primary School  
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Dear Mr Everett

Ofsted monitoring of schools with a notice to improve

Thank you for the help and information, which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 23 February 2010. Please also pass my appreciation onto the governors, parent forum group and local authority representative for taking the time to meet me at such short notice. Your pupils were very helpful in the way they took time to talk informally with me at break and at lunchtime; please thank them for me.

The visit took place during a week that included activities which focused on your links with other countries and, in particular, work was being undertaken on Welsh culture and features of localities in Wales. Two senior teachers were attending a training course offsite and some lessons were taught by temporary teachers. However, it was possible to gain sufficient evidence from meetings, pupils' work and staff records to make judgements about the progress the school is making.

As a result of the inspection on 17–18 June 2009, the school was asked to ensure that

- senior staff work closely together
- standards rise through challenging work and that the promotion of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are integrated into curriculum planning
- pupils know the levels they are working at, as well as their targets
- communication with parents is improved



- the Early Years Foundation Stage leader has guidance about how to improve provision.

Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making satisfactory progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the pupils' achievement.

The governors' 'core group', now monitor and evaluate the school's progress; they have been tenacious and passionate in ensuring that relationships between senior leaders are positive and that parents are better informed about the school's work and their children's progress. There has been much emphasis on improving working relationships and to ensure that senior staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities. However, a staff survey undertaken by governors in October revealed that the staff had not fully observed the benefits of this intervention. Since then, governors, together with the school improvement partner / link adviser, have undertaken further work with individual members. Communication with staff has now improved and benefits have been noted. Staff are now positive about the improvements made and different staff groups, such as teaching assistants, now feel better included in school life. Their role has been extended further through training, to support pupils who struggle with their literacy and numeracy skills. Agreed working practices now ensure each of the management team carries out their roles effectively. For instance, there is now a greater emphasis on examining the quality of teaching and learning and monitoring the outcomes of pupils. All this is now improving the school's capacity to improve provision.

Communication with parents has improved; the parent forum has carried out some sterling work. Staff are taking greater responsibility in keeping parents better informed about children's progress. There are still some concerns about how the school is tackling the difficult behaviour of a very few pupils. However, behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Pupils are polite and keen to show and explain their work. Staff are clearly benefitting from the sound support from the local authority; behaviour specialists visit the school and staff are now better skilled at managing the occasional challenging behaviour by a very few pupils.

As a result of the headteacher's work with another local 'mentor' school, Baschurch's system for tracking individual pupils' progress has improved. Designated staff oversee this and are now able to identify pupils who are not making expected progress. They provide suitable interventions to support learning. Pupils now have targets and are proud to talk about these. However, because they have so many targets they do not remember them all; they are not easy to use by pupils and staff during lessons. There is a greater emphasis on pupils' utilising their literacy skills in other subjects, although there has been less of a focus on numeracy.

The quality of teaching and learning seen on the visit was satisfactory and occasionally good. Relationships are strong and pupils are keen learners. While staff provide activities for different pupils to do in lessons, the match of work to the range



of pupils' needs is variable and there is not always a sufficiently sharp focus on what higher attaining pupils should achieve. The school's tracking shows that most pupils are on target to reach expected levels by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils' attainment and progress in science is showing a marked improvement in Year 6 because of more focused work and clear understanding of what pupils need to do to attain higher levels. However, given that pupils' attainment on entry is above expectations, not enough pupils are working at the highest levels for their age.

In addition, the leader for the Early Years provision has benefitted from support from the local authority and now has a clearer view about how provision can be developed. Teamwork in lessons is good and parents are positive about the provision. Staff go the extra mile to keep parents informed.

The local authority's revised statement of action is satisfactory and identifies suitable strategies to aid the school's improvement. A wide range of professionals have been involved in the school, including for improving assessment, pupils' literacy and peer mentoring. Similarly, the headteacher has improved systems in the school from observing good practice elsewhere. Reports of actions carried out are helpful in gaining insight into what has been done by the school, governors and external professionals, but the evaluation of their impact is not fully in place.

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

George Derby

Additional Inspector