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Mrs Julie Larter
Headteacher
Studley Green Primary School
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Trowbridge
Wiltshire
BA14 9JQ

Dear Mrs Larter

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Studley Green Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 10 February 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please pass on my thanks to staff, pupils and governors for their help. I would like to thank the School Improvement Partner for coming into school to meet me.

Since the inspection there have been changes in the governing body to include a new chair.

As a result of the inspection on 8–9 December 2009, the school was asked to address the most important areas for improvement, which are set out in the annex to this letter.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school has made good progress in making improvements and good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Attainment remains below average; however, there is an improving trend in English and mathematics. The gap between school performance and national expectations at the end of Year 6 has significantly narrowed, as can be seen in the most recent school tests for 2011. School and national data show that, from pupils' low starting points, this represents good progress. Strategically planned interventions, such as in mathematics, have supported this good progress. In English, the confidence with which pupils now write has been a key change. Older pupils proudly share their use of descriptive sentence openers, such as 'Trembling with fear...' with the rest of the class. This improved attitude to learning can be seen in the way pupils tackle



problems set in mathematics. For instance, more-able pupils worked well together, selecting their own methods to unravel a challenge relating to numbers containing decimal points. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities in the mainstream classes and in the resource base classes make good progress as a result of the carefully tailored programmes. Older pupils in the resource base make accelerated progress in communication, and this prepares them well for the next step in their education.

The now good teaching is underpinned by effective planning which meets the needs of all pupils. A particular strength is the way teachers routinely use assessment in lessons. This means that pupils are generally keen to contribute and ensures that lessons move along at a good pace. Teachers' questioning helps pupils reflect on their work. Where the use of questions is most effective, pupils are encouraged to pose their own questions, related to the learning objective of the lesson, to others in the class. In this way, pupils are now taking responsibility for their own learning. The school recognises that occasionally a few pupils remain less confident in lessons. One way in which these pupils are supported is through the valuable contribution made by teaching assistants. Adult support means that tasks are broken down into small steps which lead to success.

Teachers' marking helps pupils to improve their work and pupils generally talk confidently about their targets. There is a balance between written marking and oral feedback from teachers. Where marking is most effective, older pupils report that it provides a challenge which helps them develop their skills further. Occasionally, not enough attention is paid to picking up basic errors in English and mathematics, which may prevent pupils achieving higher standards. The marking of work for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities in the resource bases closely matches their individual needs, and the school recognises that this good practice can be shared with the rest of the school.

The relentless drive and ambition of the leadership team in improving the quality of teaching has led to higher pupil confidence and the acceleration of their progress. Actions taken mean that staff have a greater accountability for the success of the pupils in their class. Regular reviews of pupil progress have ensured that pupils' performance is tracked systematically and those in danger of not making progress are identified and actions put in place to meet their needs. Attendance is monitored so that support is given to the poorest attenders. School figures show recent improvements in the currently average attendance.

The governing body has a clearer understanding of its roles and responsibilities. Governors are now a cohesive team committed to raising the achievement of all pupils. They contribute to school self-evaluation and are well informed through the comprehensive headteacher reports. As a result governors have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas for development. Consequently they are better placed to effectively monitor the work of the school. The improved leadership skills of middle leaders means they now play an important role in the school's



development, such as giving advice on issues relating to pupil progress in their subject. The culture of professional openness has supported the improvements to the quality of teaching and consequently pupils' enjoyment of learning.

The school has made effective use of the good quality support from the local authority to extend the role of the governors. This has had a major impact on their ability to monitor the work of the school. Governors now feel empowered to ask questions and participate in discussions relating to school improvement. The partnership with the School Improvement Partner has constantly focused on the task of tackling underperformance and improving progress. This has supported the school well and enabled leaders to take appropriate actions and build a good capacity for further improvement.

I hope that you have found the inspection helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jane Neech
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in December 2009

- Raise attainment in English and mathematics so that the progress of all pupils is accelerated and they reach the standards of which they are capable.
- Raise the quality of teaching from satisfactory to good by:
 - using assessment information more accurately to plan lessons so that tasks meet the needs of all pupils
 - questioning pupils more effectively so that they are able to make a better contribution in lessons
 - ensuring that marking helps pupils know how to improve their work
 - ensuring that all pupils know their individual targets.
- **Improve the contribution of all leaders in raising standards and pupils' progress by:**
 - extending the role of the governors so that they monitor the work of the school more effectively
 - empowering and developing the skills of key staff so that they take more responsibility for the school's development.