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8 February 2012

Mr J Reynard  
Headteacher  
Seaford Primary School  
Wilkinson Way  
Seaford  
East Sussex  
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Dear Mr Reynard

### **Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Seaford Primary School**

Thank you for the help which you, your pupils and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 7 February 2012, and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. I greatly appreciated the enthusiasm and good humour with which teachers and pupils showed me their work and answered my questions.

Since the last inspection, leadership and management of core subjects have been restructured and the curriculum has been revised.

As a result of the inspection on 30 November and 1 December 2010, 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 is demonstrating an improved capacity for sustained improvement.

### **Achievement of pupils at the school**

Attainment in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 rose significantly in 2011, to be well above average. More than eight in every 10 pupils gained at least Level 4 in both English and mathematics and more than one in every three gained Level 5. Whereas boys outperform girls in Key Stage 1, the gap has closed by the end of Key Stage 2. Progress by most pupils in Key Stage 2 exceeds predictions based on their prior attainment. Significantly better than average progress is made by pupils on the school action plus programme, in response to regularly reviewed



support both in and out of lessons. Progress by the very small number of pupils known to eligible for free school meals is improving, although not yet matching that made by other pupils.

Pupils are aware of their current levels and know what they must do to reach their personal targets. Pupils across the ability range benefit from detailed and constructive marking. Time is now regularly given for them to respond to teachers' comments and corrections, and the impact can be seen in their subsequent work. Improvement is most striking by less-able pupils; in Years 5 and 6, for example, they progress from writing short and fragmented pieces to presenting work that has a coherent structure and useful range of expression. While more-able pupils achieve well in formal assessments and develop a strong armoury of skills, they are not always successfully challenged to extend their thinking or to be experimental and original in their writing.

### **The quality of teaching**

Accurate analysis of information about attainment and progress shapes planning that is regularly updated to reflect pupils' knowledge and skills. Whole-staff training and individual coaching are raising the overall quality of teaching, so that good practice, especially in planning and assessment, is becoming securely embedded in each key stage. Amongst the strengths now well established are: confident subject knowledge; variety of approach; detailed and constructive feedback to pupils in lessons and in the marking of work; firm but friendly behaviour management; effective use of varied resources; and integration of group work and peer-review into lessons, so that pupils both develop inter-personal skills and extend their knowledge. In a Year 5 mathematics class, for example, ability-based groups of pupils used brochures and the internet to research options for a family holiday abroad, calculating distances in miles and kilometres, establishing journey times that took time zones into account, and estimating costs. On occasions, however, the impact of a potentially productive activity is lessened when pupils embark upon it without having a clear grasp of the key elements.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and are keen to live up to their teachers' expectations. They treat adults and each other with consideration and behave sensibly in lessons and around the school. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 were emphatic that: 'It's really friendly...really polite.' They feel safe – justifiably so given the school's thorough safeguarding procedures and staff training.

### **The quality of leadership and management of the school**

The school's accurate self-evaluation and improvement plan show that the governing body, the headteacher and senior leaders have responded thoughtfully and in



practical ways to recommendations made in the last inspection report. Rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning sets priorities for the professional development of teachers and support staff. Links with Brighton University and local schools are exploited effectively to share good practice and to moderate assessments of pupils' work. Partly through sharing ideas and experience amongst themselves and partly through more formal professional development, leaders of the core subjects and each key stage are gaining confidence and successfully leading improvements in teaching and the curriculum.

The curriculum's focus on skills development, especially in literacy and numeracy, and on practical and investigative work, is underpinning rising attainment. In English and across the curriculum, pupils are responding well to opportunities for extended writing in a variety of forms, including letters, reports of events such as the Spanish Armada, stories and persuasive argument. Problem-solving activities are planned into weekly mathematics and science lessons. Special events – Book Week, Investigation Week and Science Week – are popular and productive complements to the mainstream curriculum, extending pupils' opportunities for creative work and for a team-based approach to practical challenges.

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

Patricia Metham

**Her Majesty's Inspector**



## Annex

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in November and December 2010**

- Accelerate progress and raise attainment in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 2 by July 2011 by:
  - increasing the amount of problem-solving and investigative activities in mathematics and science
  - providing more opportunities for extended writing in literacy and across the curriculum.
  
- Improve the consistency of teaching through the school in the coming academic year so that at least 80% is at least good by:
  - indicating to pupils how they might improve their work in all subjects and providing time for pupils to act on these suggestions
  - ensuring pupils' work is well presented
  - providing more challenging work for more-able pupils.
  
- Develop the role of senior and middle managers to enable them to monitor and evaluate the impact of their work on pupils' progress and attainment.