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25 March 2008

Mrs Fiona Howitt  
The Headteacher  
Germander Park School  
1 Germander Place  
Conniburrow  
Milton Keynes  
MK14 7DU

Dear Mrs Howitt,

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on Thursday 13 March 2008, for the time you gave to our telephone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. The staffing of your small school has changed almost completely since the last inspection, with all class teachers having been in school just over one a half terms.

This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website. Please inform the Regional Inspection Service Provider of any factual inaccuracies within 24 hours of the receipt of this letter.

As a result of the inspection on 21 February 2007, the school was asked to

- Ensure that teaching challenges more able pupils to achieve as well as they can, particularly in writing
- Make better use of target setting and assessment to accelerate the progress of all groups of pupils
- Ensure that a central list of adults working with children is compiled according to government guidelines.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making good progress in these areas.

As the school demonstrated in the standard assessment tasks in the summer of 2007, pupils are now achieving standards broadly in line with national averages, which given their lower than average starting points, indicates that they are making good progress since starting in the Reception Year. Although, as the school recognises, standards will not be quite as high this year as last, the progress made by pupils continues to be at least satisfactory. Able pupils are set challenging targets and teachers seek to ensure that they are given good opportunities to extend their learning in lessons. Writing books show that these pupils are on track to achieve good results.

Good progress has been made in setting up and using helpful systems to set learning targets for individual pupils and to track their progress towards these. These systems are used well to support teaching. Teachers are knowledgeable about exactly how well their pupils are doing and what they need to work on. Those that are in danger of falling behind are identified and specialist intervention helps them to achieve the challenging target that the school has set.

Although there are good elements in the teaching in the school, the progress towards making sure that all pupils learn as well as they can is satisfactory. Teachers now plan their lessons rigorously to ensure that the needs of pupils with differing ability levels are met. Tasks are carefully matched to pupils' needs so that they are all supported to make the next steps in their learning. There is a good level of challenge for more able pupils in both literacy and numeracy. Some teachers are very skilled at determining exactly what questions to ask pupils to promote their understanding. In lessons, therefore, learning is good for many pupils, but some, who find it difficult to manage themselves independently, make only satisfactory progress when the teacher is working with another group. All classes now review their learning each day and pupils are aware of the progress they are making. They remain eager to learn and full of enthusiasm for their life at school.

Good progress has been made in terms of safeguarding the pupils. There is now a comprehensive central list of adults working with children that has been compiled according to government guidelines.

The local authority has supported the school well through an intensive programme of support. In particular, the Raising Achievement Project has helped teachers clearly determine the next learning goals for pupils and focus their teaching on these. The Early Years Consultant has supported the development of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage. The School Improvement Partner (SIP) helps the headteacher to arrive at a fair and balanced evaluation of the effectiveness of the provision.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Emma Ing".

Emma Ing  
Her Majesty's Inspector