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Mr Ryan
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Ryan

Ofsted monitoring of schools with a notice to improve

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 07 October 2008, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. Please pass on my thanks to the acting chair of governors, the representative from the local authority (LA), and the staff and pupils with whom I spoke. They all helped me evaluate the progress the school is making.

Since the inspection in February 2008 there have been a number of significant changes within the school. One member of staff is on long-term sick leave and another on maternity leave. Consequently, supply staff are covering the teaching in Year 3 and Year 4. The school has increased the number of teaching assistants it employs so that each class now has daily support. The chair of governors resigned in September 2008 due to relocation and currently the governing body has an acting chairperson. A new deputy headteacher was appointed in May 2008. The school is also undergoing a significant building programme to extend the classroom facilities.

As a result of the inspection in February 2008, the school was asked to: make effective use of the assessment and tracking data to improve achievement of pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 in English, mathematics and science; improve the quality and consistency of teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2; review the curriculum to ensure that time is used effectively and extension activities extend and engage pupils; and ensure that the learning needs of all pupils are effectively met in all lessons.

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 pupils' achievement.

The 2008 provisional, unvalidated national test results for Year 6 pupils and the school's own data indicate that standards are improving. Standards are rising faster in

mathematics than in English, reflecting where the school has placed most emphasis. The picture is less positive in Key Stage 1, however, where the 2008 assessments show that standards in reading, writing and mathematics continued to fall in Year 2 and consequently were too low.



The school's recently developed tracking system is being used increasingly effectively and clearly identifies that pupils in other year groups are making better progress than at the time of the previous inspection. More pupils than before are now working at the levels expected for their age. Indeed, some year groups are making significant strides. At the time of the previous inspection, for example, only 26% of pupils in Year 5 were working at the expected level whereas 65% are now doing so. However, in some other year groups standards remain too low. Although recent staffing difficulties have been resolved they have had an impact; consequently, some Year 3 pupils have much to catch up.

The school is achieving success in developing and implementing systems to monitor the impact teaching has on learning. The quality and consistency of teaching is improving across the school. How teachers mark pupils' work is getting better and pupils now receive much clearer guidance about how to improve their work. Pupils say that 'This is really helping.' The pace of learning is also improving, helped by clear lesson objectives that are understood by pupils. Lessons are now planned so that pupils of all abilities have a better match of work to challenge and extend them. Due to the increased number of support staff, pupils who require additional help are also making better progress. Pupils report that behaviour in class is also improving because 'teachers explain things better, so we all know what we should be doing' and that 'school is now more exciting'.

Leaders have acted quickly to restructure the timing of the school day; consequently much less time is wasted and there is now a more purposeful learning environment. The school has developed a new computer suite and installed interactive whiteboards in every classroom. Staff receive on-going training to make the most of this investment. Curriculum developments have initially focused around mathematics and English, and progress in developing other extension activities has been slower.

The LA has been actively supporting the school. Indeed, the school and LA have been working in close partnership establishing firm foundations in teaching and learning on which to build further.

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

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. Alex." followed by a stylized flourish.

Jim Alexander
Additional Inspector