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Mrs W Jacobs  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Jacobs

### Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 8–9 December 2009, and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. Please pass on my thanks to the Reverend Tim Jeffreys, Chair of the Governing Body, and to Sue Quirk, local authority school improvement partner, for making their time available to me.

As a result of the inspection on 17–18 November 2008, the school was asked to:

- improve the consistency of teaching so that it matches the quality of the best in raising expectations and making better use of assessment in the classroom
- develop pupils' independent learning skills in order to help them learn more consistently
- further improve attendance so that all pupils share in the improved progress.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school has made:

good progress in making improvements

outstanding progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Pupils make good progress in the majority of lessons, and this is confirmed by their workbooks and by the school's data on their progress. The progress of pupils in Year 6 is accelerated by effective intervention programmes and outstanding teaching. As a result, attainment in the 2009 national tests taken at the end of Key Stage 2 improved significantly to well-above the national average overall. Standards were well-above average in English, mathematics and science. Given that the pupils' attainment on entry to the school was below average, their achievement was



outstanding. There was little difference in the achievement of pupils by gender, ethnicity or ability; all achieved very well due to effective inclusion and support. Improvements were also evident in the national assessments taken at the end of Key Stage 1. While attainment overall was below average, standards were in line with national expectations in writing and mathematics. They remained well-below expectations in reading. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language achieve well due to effective specialist provision.

The quality of teaching is now good in the majority of lessons. This is due to effective professional development provided by the local authority and by senior leaders from across the federation of the two primary schools. Challenging targets are raising teachers' expectations of pupils' achievement. Teachers are held to account for the standards pupils reach, in regular pupil progress meetings. Pupils know their target levels and what they need to do to improve their work. Through rigorous monitoring of data on pupils' progress, senior leaders identify any underachievement and provide effective intervention programmes. Some teachers are beginning to use assessment information to match lessons more closely to the differing needs of pupils, but this practice is not yet consistently applied by all teachers. In a minority of lessons the pace of learning is slow, although satisfactory overall. In these lessons, insufficient use is made of regular feedback from pupils and of challenging questions to extend their understanding.

Pupils are developing independent learning skills well in the majority of lessons. For example, in mathematics they investigate number patterns, solve problems in sharing items equally, measure weight and length, and present their findings. In literacy, they brainstorm ideas in pairs, plan their writing and evaluate their own work and that of others. As a result, they are eager to learn and work productively with each other. Their behaviour is good and this is supported by positive relationships with their teachers.

Attendance has improved steadily and is currently broadly average at 94.1%. This is due to robust procedures for following up absence and lateness and effective systems for rewarding attendance and punctuality. Pupils know the slogan, 'in line by five to nine'.

Outstanding progress has been made in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement. Key factors in this are the dedicated drive and ambition of the headteacher and the sharing of expertise across the federation of schools. This includes subject expertise and also rigorous monitoring and evaluation of pupils' progress against challenging targets. Senior leaders are developing effective skills in monitoring and evaluating performance data, lesson observations, pupils' work and teachers' planning. Accurate self-evaluation informs relevant priorities in school development planning and staff training. The impact of this is seen in the improvements in teaching and in pupils' learning and progress. The new school building and facilities add to the high morale of staff. Teachers make good use of the interactive whiteboards to plan and deliver lessons. Training for teaching



assistants results in their effective support for pupils with special educational needs and for those who are at an early stage of learning English. Procedures for engaging staff and pupils in evaluating pupils' progress towards their targets are applied consistently and create a positive climate for learning. Safeguarding arrangements are robust.

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

Sue Frater  
Her Majesty's Inspector

