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Mrs J Girle
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Dear Mrs Girle

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 25 November 2009, 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 for their contributions to pupils, staff, your chair of governors and representatives of the local authority.

Since the last inspection, two teachers have left the school and three have been appointed; they joined the school in September 2009. The governing body has established an executive committee with the specific brief to monitor and evaluate progress made by the school since the last inspection. The mobility of pupils in and out of school continues to be high in comparison with the national average. The percentage of pupils joining the school who are at the early stages of language acquisition in both their home language and English is high and increasing. This percentage increase is also reflected in the complexity of special educational needs and/or learning disabilities that pupils have when joining the school.

As a result of the inspection on 8 – 9 October 2008, the school was asked to:

- improve the rigour, accuracy and impact of the school's self-evaluation
- make more effective use of assessment data and test information to monitor how well pupils make progress over time and set challenging targets
- improve the consistency in pupils' learning and achievement in writing, mathematics and science so that a greater proportion make accelerated progress.

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.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

The headteacher has successfully involved the senior leadership team and all staff to tackle the issues raised for improvement at the school's inspection in October 2008. At the time of the inspection, it was acknowledged that the school's tracking systems and the data generated were extensive. Since that time, the school has raised its expectations to ensure that the information gathered is used effectively to make a difference in both provision and pupils' learning. As a result, data are carefully analysed for groups of pupils, and for individuals, to determine whether or not pupils are making the gains expected in their progress. Subsequent to such analysis, if a pupil has not made the expected progress, the curriculum is modified, and additional focused support is implemented through intervention programmes to aid pupils' learning and achievement.

The better use of assessment information in the classroom is also making a difference. It is commonplace to see lesson planning that indicates the expectations for different groups of pupils within the class and, in English and mathematics lessons, to see the levels at which pupils are working. Targets are set for individuals to help pupils improve their work. In discussion with them, pupils were in no doubt that they find them challenging! Teachers who are expert in their field provide support and coaching for others and this has improved the consistency of the good and better teaching in school and therefore the good progress that pupils make in lessons. Outstanding teaching is exemplified by creative approaches to learning, for example by sharing with pupils in a science lesson videoed clips of a recent experiment carried out when testing forces. As a result, Year 6 pupils were clearly able to see why their investigation had been successful or not and this underpinned their next investigation well and their next steps in learning. It is no surprise that pupils said they enjoy being at school and that lessons are fun. On occasions, in some lessons, opportunities are missed for pupils to contribute to their learning by assessing each other's work. Nonetheless, strategies used to implement 'assessment for learning' are secure throughout the school. Pupils are confident to talk to their peers in a range of subjects to consider different approaches to an activity and how they might apply their skills to new tasks.

The provision for pupils who are new to speaking English, or who have English as an additional language, continues to be of good quality and is implemented well by teachers and teaching assistants. For example, communication with pupils in their home language is effective and ensures that pupils are fully involved in lessons and are learning well. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are similarly well provided for. Others who find attendance at school on a regular basis difficult to achieve are supported well along with their families. As a result, the percentage of persistent absenteeism has been reduced. With the effective teaching, care, guidance and support that the school provides, pupils are making consistently better progress and at an accelerated pace. The school's analysis of test data and ongoing assessments show that standards remain low. However, when factoring into the outcomes whether or not pupils joined school recently and whether or not they have prior test results available, the analysis makes clear that while pupils'



achievement is satisfactory overall, many pupils do well in relation to their different starting points.

Leaders, managers and governors have been keen to ensure that their self-evaluation is accurate and informs their planning for improvement effectively. To this end, the governors have established an executive committee whose remit is to monitor, evaluate and challenge the work of the school specifically in connection with the progress made since the school's inspection. Supplementary to this is the rigorous monitoring of the school's provision. Those involved in monitoring the school's work include not only senior leaders but also advanced skills teachers so that their expertise can be used effectively throughout school to share good practice. As a result of monitoring and its evaluation, senior leaders, managers and governors have a clear picture of the school's performance and an accurate understanding of the school's weaknesses, thus demonstrating a strengthening of capacity to improve.

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

Elisabeth Linley
Her Majesty's Inspector

