

16 March 2010

Mr A Bridewell  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mr Bridewell

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 10 March 2010 and for the information which you provided during my visit. Please pass on my thanks to your Chair of the Governing Body, the Advisory Headteacher, staff and pupils.

Since the last inspection, the school has employed two classroom teachers. An advisory headteacher has been working at the school for half a day each week supporting the school in raising pupils' achievement. A new School Improvement Partner has also been appointed.

As a result of the inspection on 7-8 July 2009, the school was asked to:

- improve standards and achievement at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, especially in writing and mathematics
- ensure that all pupils know what they need to do to improve further and are fully challenged to reach the targets set for them
- link evaluations of improvement planning more closely to the impact of measures taken to increase pupils' achievement.

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.

Data shows that progress is improving across the school, especially in writing and mathematics. Pupils are making better progress in other areas too, including reading and science. At Key Stage 1, pupils in Year 1 are making good progress. In Year 2, progress is now satisfactory and attainment is rising but has not accelerated sufficiently for all pupils to reach age expected levels by the end of the year, particularly at the higher levels. At Key Stage 2, the better progress in Year 5, noted in the last inspection report, has been built on successfully and the majority of pupils

in Year 6 are on track to attain at or close to national expectations, including in writing and mathematics. The school has focused on improving the systems for tracking pupil progress at both individual and year group level. This is making a significant contribution to pupils' better progress because the data is being used well to focus teaching so that it meets pupils' individual learning needs and to identify those who require additional help and support.

The quality of teaching is improving. Teachers are now sharply focused on pupils' progress. All lessons have clear learning objectives and success criteria which are shared with the class. Pupils are encouraged to use these criteria to reflect on the success of their own learning. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use a variety of teaching styles to interest and engage pupils in lessons. However, they do not always make the best use of the interactive whiteboards, installed in each classroom, to enhance learning. On a few occasions, teachers miss opportunities to explore the reasons behind pupils' answers or involve others in the discussion to develop their learning and literacy skills. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively to work with small groups or individuals. Assessment has improved significantly. Pupils are now provided with clear guidance on the next steps in their learning through new 'learning ladders' which are pasted into their exercise books. Progress against these criteria is rigorously assessed and recorded. Pupils of all ages speak with confidence about their current progress, the level they are working at and what they need to do next. Pupils' work is marked regularly. Teachers are becoming increasingly skilled at providing comments to guide pupils to the next level, although inconsistencies in practice remain.

The school, to its credit, has been determined to lead and drive improvements to raise pupils' attainment and achievement. The local authority statement of action is linked closely to the well-focused improvement plan and provides a sound basis for working in partnership with the school. The local authority monitors regularly the school's work through termly review conferences using data supplied by the school and information from the School Improvement Partner, advisory headteacher and local authority consultants. The school's development plan clearly outlines its priorities and actions which are underpinned by success criteria linked to improvements in pupil performance. Governors and senior leaders are taking a very active approach to monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and the impact of actions to secure better progress for pupils. This better knowledge of the school's performance is enabling support to be appropriately targeted both from within and outside school. As a result, the Local Authority has responded to the school's needs and revised its plan for supporting them.

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

Angela Corbett  
Her Majesty's Inspector