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Mr P H Philpott
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Dear Mr Philpott

OFSTED MONITORING OF GRADE 3 SCHOOLS

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 16 March 2007, for the time you gave to our phone discussions, and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. In particular, I would like to thank your literacy and numeracy leaders and your chair of governors for spending time in meetings with me.

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 17 and 18 January 2006, the school was asked to ensure that school performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets and to make use of assessment information to raise teachers' expectations of pupils' capabilities and set work well matched to their learning needs.

Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making good progress in addressing the issues for improvement.

The school has made significant improvement in monitoring and evaluating its own performance. It now analyses rigorously data from statutory and non statutory tests in order to identify strengths and areas for improvement in the performance of all pupils. Using the data available, the school is now setting clear and challenging targets for all pupils based on their prior attainment. Importantly, it is monitoring pupils' performance during the course of the school year in order to identify and, if necessary, put in place effective support programmes for pupils who underachieve. Through very good monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning using lesson observations, monitoring of teachers' planning and analysing pupils' work, the headteacher

and subject leaders have a very detailed knowledge of pupils' achievement. The governing body is holding the school to account in relation to the progress it is making against the two issues. It is monitoring the school's performance regularly, with a clear focus on raising achievement of all pupils. Validation of the school's success is seen in the letter it received from the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) congratulating it on being one of the top 100 performing schools based on school improvement in the period 2003 to 2006.

Good improvement in teachers' lesson planning shows that the different learning needs of all pupils in the class are met successfully. The strength in literacy and numeracy is the use of a consistent planning format. There are particular strengths in the expectations for more able pupils, including those identified by the school as gifted and talented. In a Year 2 literacy lesson, more able pupils successfully applied new learning about prefixes to sentences with exclamation marks and speech marks. In a Year 4 numeracy lesson, the more able were successful in solving challenging mental arithmetic problems. In a Year 6 literacy lesson, very effective support from teaching assistants and the class teacher meant that all pupils made good progress in writing a letter of complaint about bad service in a restaurant.

Lessons begin with teachers sharing the learning objective with pupils and telling them what they want them to achieve by the end of the lesson. Teachers, use good questioning to ensure that pupils understand the learning objective. As a result, pupils know what is expected of them and they work hard in lessons. Pupils respond exceptionally well to the challenges set by teachers because work is now matched carefully to their individual levels. Pupils with learning difficulties receive very effective support from dedicated teaching assistants who work as part of the teaching team in ensuring work is well matched to their needs.

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

Yours sincerely

D J Curtis

David Curtis
Additional Inspector