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Mr M Dee
Executive Headteacher
Parkwall Primary School
Earlstone Crescent
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Dear Mr Dee

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 12 May 2010, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during my visit.

Since the last inspection the headteacher retired. Subsequently you were appointed as executive headteacher and the deputy headteacher became the associate headteacher. The associate headteacher has since been promoted and left the school at the end of the spring term 2010. A new associate headteacher started work at the school on 19 April 2010. There have also been considerable staff changes in the last two years, with five teachers leaving the school and four joining.

As a result of the inspection on 18 and 19 June 2008, the school was asked to:

- provide pupils with more opportunities to write at length in literacy and in other subjects and improve the quality of pupils' handwriting
- raise the quality of teaching and learning so that it is consistently good and allows all pupils to make good progress in lessons and over time
- embed the use of 'must, should, could' targets so that all classes match the exemplary practice in Year 3.

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.

Standards of attainment in writing are rising and rates of progress are increasing. There is clear and sustained evidence that the gap between the levels pupils should be reaching for their age and what they are currently attaining is narrowing. The quality of pupils' writing is enhanced by the greater opportunities for writing at



length, both in literacy and in other subjects. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 demonstrate an increasing complexity and sophistication in their writing, particularly when writing stories and narrative in response to creative and stimulating contexts. Achievement in writing, reflected in the pupils' books is satisfactory. The quality of pupils' handwriting is generally good. Pupils present their work well and take pride in writing neatly, legibly and fluently.

The pupils are exceptionally well behaved and have extremely positive attitudes to their learning. They are courteous, polite, good humoured and welcoming to visitors. They work hard and support each other well. They show great sensitivity and maturity when assessing each other's work.

The quality of teaching and learning continues to improve and has many strong features. Relationships are very positive and expectations are high. This is clearly reflected in the better rates of progress towards achieving targets and improvements in writing standards. Targets are used consistently in all classes to assess and evaluate pupils' progress. Curriculum planning is detailed and thorough, although pupils' different starting points and capabilities are not always given sufficient consideration in teachers' weekly plans.

Together with the associate headteacher and the senior leadership team you provide a clear sense of educational direction and purpose, demonstrating openness and high levels of professionalism. Monitoring and evaluation are systematic and fit for purpose although you recognise that written feedback to teachers needs to be clearer, for example setting targets for improvement and sharp timescales for following up agreed actions. While there are good systems in place to track pupils' progress and achievements, recent changes to the way assessments are recorded are affecting the school's ability to accurately analyse and use data to drive improvements further. The local authority provides a good level of support and challenge and is effectively monitoring the school's progress.

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

Andrew Watters
Her Majesty's Inspector