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13 October 2010

Miss Francine Foster
Headteacher
Kingsway Primary School
Ashville Road
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Merseyside
CH44 9EF

Dear Miss Foster

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Kingsway Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 12 October 2010, for the time you gave to our telephone discussion and on site preparation visit, and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please also pass on my thanks to the staff, pupils and governors for taking time to talk with me

After the school was last inspected in December 2008 a number of staff changes occurred. The staffing situation has now been stable for 18 months.

As a result of the inspection on 8 and 9 December 2008, the school was asked to address the most important areas for improvement which are set out in the annex to this letter.

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.

Attainment has improved in all subjects since the last inspection. The high profile the school has given to improving attainment and pupils' learning and progress in reading has resulted in much improved standards throughout the school. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are making much better progress in learning early reading skills and attain standards that are in line with the national average by the end of Reception. Attainment in reading by the end of Key Stage 1 has risen from exceptionally low in 2008 and is now average. The most recent, unvalidated, test results for the end of Key Stage 2 in 2010, reflect a three-year upward trend in English and indicate attainment in reading is in line with the national average. The school has invested significantly in reading resources, including a new reading

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scheme, books specifically targeted to improve boys' interest in reading, and new fiction and non-fiction resources for all curriculum topics throughout the school. Action to improve the teaching of reading and how this is organised in the curriculum has also been extremely successful, with some outstanding teaching of reading seen during the inspection. The frequent exposure to different texts, including pupils hearing good quality reading modelled daily by teachers, is further reinforced with daily reading homework for all pupils, which has also successfully harnessed parental support in the drive to raise standards. The overall impact has been significant, not only in raising attainment but also in promoting pupils' interest and enthusiasm for reading. In discussion, it was evident that both boys and girls enjoy and have a good knowledge of a range of reading genres and authors.

Attainment in science by the end of Year 6 has shown year-on-year improvement. From a position of low attainment in 2008, the most recent teacher assessments for Year 6 pupils in 2010 indicate average attainment, with a notable increase in the proportion of pupils attaining the higher level. Action to raise attainment has included the purchase of new equipment and a concerted focus on developing pupils' scientific skills. Pupils' work shows that scientific investigation and practical work is a consistent feature throughout the school and pupils develop good knowledge and understanding of many scientific ideas in this way. Teachers also ensure that skills in literacy and numeracy are reinforced in science, for example, pupils measure distances and sounds and record the results of their investigations in graphs and charts. Teachers' marking of pupils' science work is consistently good, with teachers offering praise for what pupils have achieved and always providing a point for improvement. Pupils are aware of their targets and say that they really enjoy science investigations because they work together in groups and find out lots of new things.

Since the last inspection, the outdoor area for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage has been significantly developed and new resources purchased. The location of the outdoor area does not allow children continuous access, but all get an opportunity to work outdoors each day and enjoy doing so. While the quality of the outdoor area and resources are better, work still needs to be done to improve the quality of provision in terms of enabling genuine child-initiated activity and ensuring that adult intervention more effectively promotes children's thinking and problem solving skills.

Support from the headteacher and local authority has been particularly significant in improving governance. Governors have a better understanding of their roles and responsibilities and their higher profile in the school has ensured that they are now known to staff, pupils and parents and carers. Governors have a much clearer awareness of the school's work and are more confident to ask questions about the school's performance. Although governors' strategic role in promoting the school's improvement is still developing, those improvements that have occurred to date have added to the school's capacity for sustained improvement.

Communication with parents and carers is now regular and informative. They are kept up to date with information about the curriculum their children will follow each term, their children's targets and progress. Parents and carers also welcome the opportunities that are provided for them to be involved in family learning projects where practical skills are promoted, such as cookery, healthy eating on a budget and supporting their children's learning and managing their behaviour.

The headteacher has been proactive in seeking support from the local authority. This has been focused and very effective. The school's progress and success in tackling the recommendations for improvement, particularly in relation to raising pupils' attainment and progress, reflect positively on its capacity for sustained improvement.

I hope that you have found the inspection helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Margot D'Arcy
Additional Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in December 2008.

- Raise standards in reading in both key stages.
- Raise standards in science by the end of Year 6.
- Improve provision for outdoor learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Ensure that governance is effective.
- Communicate information about the school's work and its plans for improvement more effectively to parents and the community.