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Mrs Lane
Kingsley Primary School
Wallace Road
Northampton
NN2 7EE

Dear Mrs Lane

Notice to improve: monitoring inspection of Kingsley Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 25 January 2011 and for the information which you provided during the inspection. I was also grateful for the time you gave to meeting with me on the afternoon before the inspection. Please pass on my thanks to the pupils, staff and parents with whom I met during the day.

Since the last inspection, three members of the teaching staff have left the school and new teachers have been recruited. The school is currently operating without a deputy-headteacher and continues to be led by an interim headteacher.

As a result of the inspection on 13 and 14 July 2010, the school was asked to

- Improve teaching, learning and the curriculum to accelerate pupils' progress and raise attainment in English, mathematics and science.
- Improve the way teachers mark pupils' work.
- Improve the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by appointing a leader and developing a curriculum that is more appropriate for young children.
- Work with parents to improve attendance levels.

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 and in raising pupils' achievement.

Robust assessment systems have been established. School leaders now have a more accurate picture of pupils' achievement as a result of improved monitoring and evaluation. Regular pupil progress meetings hold staff to account for attainment in each class. Teachers are increasing their knowledge of assessment and their understanding of what pupils should be attaining. They use this knowledge to plan lessons in English and mathematics well matched to meet the different needs of pupils, including potentially higher attaining pupils. Pupils have made slower progress in science because teachers' planning lacks the precision evident in English and mathematics and lessons do not accurately meet the needs of all pupils.

The progress of individual pupils and pupils from different groups is accelerating in English and mathematics because teaching has improved, and, although still low, attainment across the school is improving. A secure proportion of teaching is good. Better teaching has clear learning objectives, good pace, high expectations and well-structured activities which engage pupils well. These features of teaching were consistently observed in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics across the school. The curriculum has been adapted to remove repetition and ensure progression in learning. However, the school acknowledges that more work needs to be done to develop a clear progression of pupils' skills through the curriculum as they move through the school.

The school has made strong progress in improving the way letters and sounds are taught. All staff have received relevant training and as such have the necessary skills to support pupils well in lessons. Parents have attended 'letters and sounds' information sessions to help develop their understanding of the school's strategies and philosophy. The school carefully tracks the progress pupils make in learning letters and sounds and are able to swiftly identify underachievement. Appropriate intervention strategies are in place for those children making slower progress. The school learning environment is adorned with a broad selection of accessible writing and text prompts and includes a display of writing linked to another language. Well-designed role play areas encourage children to engage with others in a range of contexts. As a result of the improvements made, pupils are becoming increasingly confident in their use of spoken language and in their independent writing.

The school has made good improvements in the way teachers mark pupils' work. Marking in English, mathematics and science was observed to be of a consistently high quality. A new marking policy has been introduced and marking provides clear guidance to help pupils improve their work and identify the next steps of learning. The marking of younger pupils' work frequently includes small pictures and diagrams to help them to better understand the teacher's comments. All pupils have appropriate improvement targets stuck into their English and mathematics books, and are able to use these confidently to support their learning.

Strong leadership and management, particularly from the interim headteacher has underpinned the strong improvements made to the school. A leader has been appointed to support the development of improved provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Effective monitoring and evaluation has led to the identification and improvement of weaknesses in provision and learning environments. Leaders are in place to support and monitor the progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils who speak English as an additional language and consequently these pupils make good progress. The school has worked effectively with parents to improve pupils' attendance and attendance; figures are now in line with the national average and improving quickly. The school's single central record meets statutory requirements.

The statement of action produced by the local authority following the last inspection meets requirements. The action plan is appropriate and school leaders have an accurate understanding of the progress being made through good evaluations. Monitoring activities are clearly defined with a focus on outcomes for pupils.

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

Jeremy Spencer
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in July 2010

- Improve teaching, learning and the curriculum to accelerate pupils' progress and raise attainment in English, mathematics and science by:
 - ensuring that higher-attaining pupils are sufficiently challenged
 - making sure that assessment information is used accurately to match activities to all abilities
 - improving the way letters and sounds are taught
 - sharpening the monitoring and evaluating role of coordinators for special educational needs, English as an additional language and the Early Years Foundation Stage.

- Improve the way teachers mark pupils' work by:
 - making sure that pupils receive clearer guidance on what they need to do to improve and reach their targets
 - checking that marking helps pupils to develop correct letter and number formation and focuses more effectively on basic sentence construction and spelling.

- Improve the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by appointing a leader and developing a curriculum that is more appropriate for young children.

- Work with parents to improve attendance levels