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Pat MacDougall
Headteacher
South View Infant School
Off Shooters Way
Basingstoke
Hampshire
RG21 5LL

Dear Mrs MacDougall

Notice to improve: monitoring inspection of South View Infant School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 20 November 2010 and for the information which you provided during the inspection. Please pass on my thanks to those staff who held a meeting with me, the chair of the governing body and the district manager from the local authority who came into school to meet me.

There have been no significant contextual changes since the previous inspection.

As a result of the inspection on 10 March 2010, 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 is making good progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the pupils' achievement.

The results of the 2010 teacher assessments for pupils in Year 2 were broadly average and represent a significant improvement over the previous few years. In particular, the attainment of pupils of middle and above-average ability was in line with the national average. Evidence from the school's tracking data and pupils' work indicates that the current Year 2 group are on track to do at least as well. In Years 1 and 2, evidence from lessons and pupils' books shows that many pupils make good progress and that their achievement is good. Teachers' planning, especially the consistency of planning across each year group, provides challenge for all groups of pupils. Marking is a strength and identifies next steps for pupils and links closely to pupils' individual targets. Pupils' self-assessment of their work against the lesson objectives and learning outcomes is good. In books, there is evidence that pupils work hard and produce a good amount of work both in literacy and numeracy which is presented neatly and carefully. The quality of pupils' handwriting is a strength,

with many producing legible and joined cursive scripts. Key skills in spelling, grammar and punctuation are good, with more-able pupils in Year 2 showing an impressive understanding of the correct use of speech marks and exclamation marks. Many pupils write at length and there are examples of high-quality writing in cross-curricular work, such as that produced in a 'robots' project that linked literacy, numeracy and design and technology effectively. During the monitoring inspection, pupils' behaviour was exemplary and pupils really enjoyed their learning. A particular strength is that pupils know how to work independently and do not need support from adults to complete their work, although they know that they may ask for help if needed.

The proportion of children who reached the nationally expected level in communication, language and literacy and personal, social and emotional development doubled at the end of their Reception year in comparison with the previous year. Children make good progress in their learning. Across the Early Years Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) children are confident in choosing their own activities and sustaining interest in them. Teachers and teaching assistants are skilled at asking questions which challenge children's thinking and extend their vocabulary. In the indoor and outdoor areas, mark making is encouraged, which promotes the successful development of early writing skills, especially for boys.

Attendance for the current academic year to date is 96.%. Children in particular have responded enthusiastically to wanting their class to win 'Attendance Bear' at the end of each week. In addition, the slogan 'Don't stay in bed, come to school instead', which was devised by members of the school council and highlighted on posters produced by members, has a positive impact on improving attendance. The local authority has been very supportive of the school's drive to improve attendance.

The local authority's statement of action fulfils requirements. The school improvement partner, together with support from literacy and numeracy consultants, provides effective support which is welcomed and valued by staff. Since the last inspection, the school has further strengthened its assessment systems so that it has a detailed picture of the performance of individuals, groups and year groups. As a result, intervention programmes are put in place to support those pupils in danger of falling behind in their learning.

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

David Curtis

Additional inspector

Annex

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

- Improve attendance so that it is broadly in line with the national average by the end of July 2011, in particular by reducing the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent.
- Increase the proportion of children attaining the nationally expected level by the end of the Reception Year in both communication, language and literacy and personal, social and emotional development to at least one third by July 2011. Achieve this by:
 - giving children more opportunities for speaking and listening
 - prioritising the learning of vocabulary
 - providing more opportunities for children to initiate their own learning and giving them well-focused support to take their learning further.
- Raise the attainment and achievement of the middle- and higher-ability pupils in reading, writing and mathematics so that the proportions reaching the nationally expected level and above are in line with those achieved nationally July 2011. Achieve this by:
 - providing pupils with more challenging work
 - giving pupils more opportunity to record their work and explain their thinking
 - ensuring that pupils know the next steps in their learning.