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27 February 2011

Mrs C Randall  
Headteacher  
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Kirton Lindsey  
Gainsborough  
Lincolnshire  
DN21 4EH

Dear Mrs Randall

### **Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Kirton Lindsey Primary School**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 24 February 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. I also welcomed the opportunity to talk with other members of staff, pupils and the School Improvement Partner. Please pass on my thanks to all those involved.

Since the last inspection the Early Years Foundation Stage has undergone substantial development both indoors and outside. The outside play area is shared with a co-located but separately managed children's centre that opened in February 2010. A three-year plan to create a multi-use outdoor learning environment for the main school has been agreed. At the time of the inspection, work to develop the vegetable and fruit garden was well underway. Twenty pupils joined the school partway through the summer and autumn terms, entering different year groups. The number of children who entered the Reception class doubled at the start of the academic year 2010/11 and looks set to double again in 2011/12. A learning mentor has been appointed and the 'windmill room' established to increase the school's capacity to provide targeted interventions, such as small group work and individual pupil support.

As a result of the inspection on 1 and 2 February 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 has made good progress in making improvements and good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

The school's assessment data show that the children in Reception are making good and often outstanding progress from their individual starting points. Most children are attaining knowledge and skills above those expected for their age. This is a significant improvement resulting from the determined and sharply focused efforts of school leaders and staff in the

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Early Years Foundation Stage. The indoor and outdoor areas now provide a good range of high quality resources that promote children's learning and play very effectively. A good balance of interesting and exciting child-initiated and adult-led activities supports the development of early literacy and numeracy skills well. As a result, children observed during this visit were confident, busy and inquisitive young learners who displayed strong communication and social skills and worked happily together.

Teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 in 2009/10 indicate improving trends. At the end of Year 2, pupils made good individual progress. Pupils' individual attainment was variable reflecting the higher than usual proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities in the group. At the end of Year 6 in 2010, more pupils reached the expected Level 4 in English and mathematics than in the previous year because they had made the expected two levels of progress. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 rose significantly when compared to the previous year. In English, the proportion of pupils attaining this level rose by 23% to 35%, while in mathematics it rose by 14% to 31%. School leaders are carefully monitoring the progress of all pupils. Consequently, they can confidently demonstrate that, while attainment at the higher levels is rising, the gap between the most-able pupils and those who are not so confident in their learning is also narrowing.

Pupils' excellent attendance and good behaviour make a strong contribution to their improving progress and achievements and demonstrate their increased enjoyment of school. Pupils report close and productive relationships with their teachers and each other and appreciate having a greater say about what happens in the school, through the school parliament, for example. They talk fluently about recent improvements including better resources, the exciting developments outside and closer links between staff and their parents. Pupils are eager participants in their own learning and take this responsibility seriously because they know that their views are listened to and valued. As one pupil explained, 'My teacher really listens...if I ask a question she'll answer it even if she was about to get us to do something else... I don't feel silly when I can't answer something she asks because I know she'll make sure I understand'. Pupils thoroughly enjoy being involved in assessing their own and each other's learning and are being helped to gain a much clearer understanding of the progress they are making. For example, older pupils particularly like the new target booklet for writing. Pupils talk knowledgeably about how this is helping them to see how each individual step in learning links together, giving them a clearer idea of the levels they are aiming for. They describe working in partnership with the teacher to decide when they have achieved each step in their learning.

The proportion of good or better lessons has increased substantially as a result of well-targeted actions and development activities for staff. Lessons are generally being planned so that more-able pupils are being provided with greater challenge and to ensure that there are more opportunities for independent investigation and research. For instance, in a Year 2/3 lesson, pupils were using a magnifying glass to look at how different fabrics were constructed. They then drew the different patterns they saw before discussing these with their peers. In a Year 5 mathematics lesson, the learning objective for all the pupils was to

calculate the perimeters of different shapes. The task for the more-able pupils was made more complex by using measurements that included decimal points. Teachers' oral feedback is generally good and written comments in pupils' books usually indicate clearly how they can improve their work further. While teaching assistants are increasingly being used more effectively to support learning in classes, school leaders know there is more to do to ensure this becomes a consistently embedded practice throughout the school.

School leaders have driven improvement forward at a cracking pace and have taken carefully considered steps to ensure that the staff have moved with them. Consequently, morale has improved and there is a strong sense of purposeful action throughout the school. The leadership team know their school well and have a precise picture of what future actions are needed. School improvement plans are sharply focused with clear measurable success criteria. Strategies to monitor progress and manage performance are effective. Systems to safeguard pupils meet current requirements. Governors give generously of their time and experience and provide good support and challenge. Support from the local authority and the School Improvement Partner have been good, effectively helping the headteacher to implement the actions needed to tackle the areas for improvement. Recent strongly positive feedback from parents coupled with the increasing number of children the school is attracting show that the school is improving its standing within the local community as a result of the changes made.

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

Wendy Ripley  
Her Majesty's Inspector

## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in February 2010**

- Improve the proportion of pupils attaining higher levels in English and mathematics by:
  - providing extra support for more-able pupils
  - ensuring that more-able pupils are given work that they find challenging
  - providing more opportunities for independent investigation and research.
  
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
  - sharing with pupils a small number of success criteria for a piece of work and helping them to see which of these they are meeting and where further improvement is needed
  - ensuring greater consistency and focus in the use of oral and written feedback
  - improving the deployment, effectiveness and impact on pupils' learning of teaching assistants during whole-class time.