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Mr S Hewitt-Richards
Headteacher
The Park Infant School
Orchard Close
Park Road
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NG20 8JX

Dear Mr Hewitt-Richards

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of The Park Infant School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 14 June 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please pass on my thanks to the Chair of the Governing Body, and to the local authority's School Improvement Partner, who made themselves available at short notice. I would also like to thank the pupils, teachers and other adults observed during lessons and the pupils and teachers who met with me during the inspection.

I note that there have been some significant changes at the school since the last inspection. The school entered into a federation arrangement with The Park Junior School, which is situated on the same site, in April 2010. The headteacher at The Park Junior School became the headteacher of both schools at this time. A new deputy headteacher joined the school in September 2010.

As a result of the inspection on 26 January 2010, the school was asked to address the most important areas for improvement which are set out in the annex to this letter.

The central record of suitability checks on staff was scrutinised during the inspection and it meets the current government requirements.

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.

September 2010



Attainment is rising and pupils' achievement has improved well since the school's last inspection. Children begin in the school's Early Years Foundation Stage demonstrating knowledge and skills well below those normally expected for their age. They make good progress during their time in the Nursery and Reception classes to close the gap, particularly in the development of their personal and social skills and emotional awareness. They make good and improving progress during Years 1 and 2, particularly in reading. This is due to the school's implementation of well-measured strategies to introduce structured daily phonics sessions for all pupils. Although pupils are beginning to make stronger progress in writing, they are not always given frequent enough opportunities to practise and develop their extended writing skills in other areas of the curriculum.

Teachers are using assessment information very effectively to monitor pupils' learning in lessons and have been successful in engaging pupils well in assessing and evaluating their own learning. The introduction of 'Learning Ladders', which are used well in lessons across the school, has ensured that pupils have an increased awareness of the next steps they need to take in order to make progress. In the large majority of lessons, teachers present an appropriate level of challenge to pupils and meet the needs of different groups of pupils. Learning targets for pupils are displayed in all classrooms, and pupils demonstrate an increasing awareness of their targets and what they have to do to achieve them. Although targets generally meet the needs of different groups of pupils, on rare occasions, they do not provide a high enough level of challenge for the most-able pupils. Opportunities are also missed to share targets with parents and carers. Pupils are given frequent and clear verbal guidance during lessons to support their learning and good progress. A new marking policy has been introduced since the last inspection, and teachers provide pupils with written feedback of consistently high quality across the school. This contributes to pupils' improving progress. Despite the many improvements made in teaching and learning, the progress of some pupils is restricted, due to their low attendance.

The senior leadership team has successfully implemented a teaching and learning monitoring cycle and has effectively evaluated their findings, in order to plan further improvements. Observations of lessons have established that the school's strategies to improve assessment procedures have led to higher expectations of what pupils can achieve, and led to greater consistency of good teaching across the school. On some occasions, opportunities are missed for colleagues to observe each other's teaching, in order to further develop consistency, share good practice and develop skills.

New and effective systems have been implemented to track the progress of pupils as they move through the Early Years Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2. The progress of different groups of pupils, including those whose circumstances may make them more vulnerable, are closely tracked. Following the last inspection, school leaders identified that there were inconsistencies in the quality of teachers' assessment and moderation of pupils' progress. Staff have received relevant training and been given opportunities to develop their assessment skills. Assessment of



pupils' progress is now more accurate and teachers are confident in making judgements.

The local authority's advisory team and School Improvement Partner have provided the school with effective support during the period since the last inspection. This, together with significant improvements in the quality of assessments, the increased responsibilities and influence of the senior leadership team and subsequent improvements in the rate of pupils' progress, has helped to increase the school's 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

Jeremy Spencer
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- Raise standards, particularly in reading and writing by:
 - ensuring that teachers use assessment information effectively to set challenging work that matches the abilities of all groups of pupils, especially those who are more able
 - making sure that pupils are clear about their learning targets and what they have to do to reach them
 - ensuring that through the regular assessment of pupils' progress in lessons they are given clear guidance through teachers' marking and feedback, on what they have to do to take the next steps in learning.

- Improve the consistency of teaching and learning by rigorously monitoring and evaluating lessons to ensure that all teachers have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve.

- Strengthen leadership and management by refining the system for the tracking of assessment data to give a clearer picture of the progress pupils make as they move through the school.