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Mr W Rowe  
Headteacher  
Stopsley Community Primary School  
Hitchin Road  
Luton  
LU2 7UG

Dear Mr Rowe

### **Notice to improve: monitoring inspection of Stopsley Community Primary School**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 16 June 2011 and for the information which you provided during the inspection. Please pass on my thanks to the Chair of the Governing Body, representatives from the local authority, staff from your partner school, parents and carers, staff and to the pupils who spoke with me.

A headteacher and deputy headteacher have been appointed for September 2011. The seconded interim headteacher, who has driven improvement since just before the last inspection, returns to his school. An additional class has been created to teach Year 6 pupils next year.

As a result of the inspection on 16 November 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 satisfactory progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the pupils' achievement.

Since the last inspection, the school has implemented regular pupil progress reviews. Early signs indicate that these reviews are having an impact on accelerating pupils' learning. A recent Year 5 progress review analyzed pupil performance data and discovered that the progress of pupils in this year group in mathematics lagged behind that of other year groups. Decisive action resulted in an additional Year 5 mathematics group being formed. Using data about the gaps these pupils had in their grasp of number bonds their teacher planned specific learning outcomes for them and they made good progress in their number sentence work as a result. Standards in English and mathematics in Year 6 are average, but progress made by higher achieving pupils in this year group measured against their starting point in Year 1 is inadequate. Improved teaching this year narrowed the gaps these pupils

had as a result of inadequate teaching in earlier years throughout Key Stage 2, but they did not catch up sufficiently and so did not reach the standards of which they are capable. From September 2011, the school has secured funding to create an additional Year 6 class to teach the current Year 5 in smaller classes to plug the gaps they have in learning as a result of inadequate teaching earlier in their school life.

Teaching is satisfactory overall. The amount of good teaching has increased since the last inspection because the interim headteacher and leaders from the partner school have trained the school's leaders to conduct effective lesson observations and give teachers constructive feedback on how to improve their teaching. In addition, a lead teacher from the partner school models good practice in classrooms and this contributes to the improved teaching. In good lessons, teachers use assessment effectively to plan work matched carefully to pupils' abilities and required next steps of learning. This challenges pupils and accelerates their learning, but it is not a consistent feature of teaching across the school. Where teachers share learning objectives with pupils in pupil-friendly language, pupils are clear about what they are expected to learn and are able to measure the success of their learning. Occasionally, when learning objectives lack clarity, the teacher talks at length to explain to the pupils what they are meant to do and the pace of learning drops. Marking of pupils' written work has improved since the last inspection, but not all teachers follow their comments through to ensure that pupils make the necessary improvements.

Pupils now receive the full range of subjects expected with sufficient allocated time. A Year 1 and a Year 4 teacher have developed and pioneered a topic-based curriculum. Pupils in Year 4 say this creative curriculum is interesting, challenging and enjoyable, but it is too early to evaluate its impact on improving learning and raising standards. Information and communication technology (ICT) is now securely embedded within the curriculum. There is an effective tracking system and pupils are set challenging targets to improve their learning in reading, writing and mathematics. These systems are beginning to have an impact on raising pupil achievement.

The statement of action produced by the local authority following the last inspection meets requirements. School leaders have an accurate understanding of the progress being made. A partnership with a neighbouring outstanding school, brokered through the local authority, is effective in bringing about satisfactory improvements. The local authority consultants for ICT and creative curriculum planning are valued by the school's staff.

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  
Jeffery Plumb  
Additional inspector

## **Annex**

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

- Raise achievement and substantially improve rates of progress for all pupils by:
  - ensuring that activities in lessons are tailored precisely to help pupils of all abilities make the next steps in learning
  - ensuring that pupil progress reviews take place regularly and that prompt action is taken if any child is falling behind.
  
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
  - significantly increasing the proportion of good teaching
  - ensuring that activities are sufficiently challenging and lessons move along at a brisk pace
  - improving pupils' understanding of how they can improve their work through marking and by sharing clear criteria to enable them to judge their own success in lessons.
  
- Improve the curriculum by:
  - ensuring the full range of subjects are covered and that there is a good balance in the time allocated to different subject areas
  - ensuring that pupils receive their full entitlement to learning in ICT
  - planning creative learning opportunities that build systematically on pupils' prior experiences
  
- Make effective use of tracking data and assessment information to:
  - identify gaps in children's knowledge and understanding
  - plan activities that build on current learning
  - set challenging targets for pupils' learning in reading, writing and mathematics.