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Mrs D. Kime
Headteacher
Esh Winning Primary School
The Wynds
Esh Winning
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Dear Mrs Kime

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Esh Winning Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 2 November 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 pupils, staff and members of the governing body who I spoke to.

Since the school was last inspected a new school building has been developed to replace the existing sites. It is planned to open in April 2012. Two new teachers have been appointed. A supply teacher is covering for the long term absence of one member of staff. The management responsibilities of several members of staff have changed and the leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage has returned from maternity leave.

As a result of the inspection on 28 June 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.

In 2011, at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in English and mathematics was broadly in line with the national average but significantly improved on previous years. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 also improved, but remained below average.

The rate of pupils' progress in developing literacy and numeracy skills has improved, particularly in Key Stage 2. In 2011, the end of Year 6 national test results showed that boys made better progress than girls, particularly in mathematics. Vulnerable groups of children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities made progress that was in line with their peers and there were no gaps in performance between different groups. According to school assessment records most children enter the Nursery with personal, social development and communication skills that are below those typical for their age. School tracking records show that the progress of children in the Early Years Foundation

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Stage has improved, although by the time they enter Year 1 they are still below the levels expected.

In the lessons observed during the course of this monitoring inspection, almost all pupils made good progress in developing their reading and writing and a clearer understanding of mathematical concepts. Pupils enjoyed learning and behaved well. Teachers and assistants are meticulous in recording children's progress. They use this information effectively to plan children's next steps in their learning.

A whole-school approach has been adopted to improve the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics. This more consistent approach has benefited pupils by enabling them to enhance their own learning. For example, pupils work well together in pairs and try hard to assist each other to learn. Marking of pupils' work in English is done meticulously. Pupils know the levels they should aspire to in reading and writing and what they need to do to reach them. Teachers mark mathematics work frequently, but the comments they make to help pupils improve are not as useful as those found in English books. Information gained from assessing pupils' work is frequently used effectively to match tasks closely to pupils' abilities. However, on a few occasions, especially at the start of lessons, some activities do not fully challenge more-able pupils.

The school has an unusually high proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. These pupils are often removed from lessons to be well supported by teaching assistants. Evidence from observations during this monitoring inspection and tracking records provided by the school shows that these pupils progress well in their learning.

The development of better reading and writing skills has been the main focus of leaders' attention since the previous inspection. There are several examples of how action has brought about improvement. Priorities for improving progress and raising attainment are stated in the school's self-evaluation document and development plan. Work is still in progress to ensure self-assessment and planning documents become more concise and focused. Success criteria have been identified and build upon the improvements made to teaching and learning. Governing body minutes indicate that governors have a clear idea of the strengths and areas for improvement of the school. The single central register to ensure pupils are safeguarded meets government requirements. Well-founded plans are in place to ensure that the new building enhances the school's capacity to further improve outcomes for pupils. The local authority has provided good support to the school in assisting it to improve.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely
Andrew Johnson
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- Improve the progress of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage by ensuring that:
 - when teachers and assistants intervene with children during activities they initiate, they take all opportunities to foster further learning
 - day-to-day assessments are noted methodically and used to plan children's next steps in their learning.

- Improve progress and raise attainment in English and mathematics by ensuring that:
 - initiatives to improve reading and writing are consolidated
 - planned initiatives to improve mathematics are implemented without delay
 - teachers make more use of information from assessing pupils' work to match activities in lessons closely to their abilities
 - lessons are always structured sufficiently to motivate pupils and enable them to rise to the challenge posed
 - when teachers mark pupils' work, pupils know the levels they can aspire to reach in writing and mathematics and what they are expected to do to reach them
 - teachers analyse pupils' errors in mathematics and give specific help to put them right.

- Enhance the value of development planning by ensuring:
 - priorities for improving progress and raising attainment are clearly stated
 - actions to be taken and criteria for success are clear and focus sharply on improving progress.