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13 January 2012

Miss Denise Wells
Headteacher
Field House Infant School
Lower Whitworth Road
Ilkeston
Derbyshire
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Dear Miss Wells

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Field House Infant School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on Thursday 12 January, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. Please pass on my thanks to the staff and Chair of the Governing Body with whom I spoke, for their time and courtesy. I would like particularly to thank the pupils for the enjoyable time I spent talking with them.

Since the previous inspection, there have been no significant contextual changes.

As a result of the inspection on 9 February 2011, 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 satisfactory progress in making improvements.

Achievement of pupils at the school

Teacher assessments for 2011 and pupils' current work confirm that all pupils are making at least satisfactory progress. Overall attainment in 2011 was above average. Results of teacher assessments in writing indicate some improvement, with girls performing particularly well. However, the percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 in writing remains similar to that in 2010. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to other pupils because of the appropriate support they receive.



The quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is strengthening. Teachers are generally well prepared and expectations are rising. However, planning is not consistent throughout the school and teachers do not always ensure that independent work is well matched to meet the needs of all pupils. As a result, more-able pupils are not always suitably challenged or able to demonstrate their skills of creativity and independence, particularly in writing. The school has introduced a number of initiatives to improve writing including, 'Stir up a Story' and 'Big Writing'. Additionally, the school is beginning to plan more opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in other subjects. As a result, pupils are becoming more enthusiastic and confident writers. However, these initiatives need to be more firmly embedded in order to have a greater impact on raising attainment. The school is currently reviewing its marking policy to promote a more positive dialogue between pupils and teachers, as well as to ensure that pupils clearly understand the next steps towards meeting their targets.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour remains a significant strength. Pupils care about their community, look after their environment and help others. Pupils say emphatically that they feel safe at school and that there is no intimidating or poor behaviour.

The quality of leadership and management of the school

The school has developed links with a large, multi-cultural school in Nottingham in order to provide pupils with more opportunities to interact with children and adults from other communities. It is also involved in a sports partnership project linking children with people from around the world through the 2012 Olympics.

Senior leaders and the governing body have a realistic understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. However, the school development plan does not have a sufficiently sharp focus on the issues identified for improvement at the time of the previous inspection. The response to these issues tends to be evolving slowly rather than being assertively steered by senior leaders. Consequently, progress is satisfactory and not good.

The school has recently had a change of local authority adviser who has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and is providing effective support.

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

January 2012



Dorothy Bathgate
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in February 2011

- Accelerate pupils' progress in English in Key Stage 1 by:
 - providing more opportunities for them to develop writing skills across a range of subjects
 - providing greater challenge to pupils so that more of them securely reach National Curriculum Level 3 in writing by the end of Year 2.

- Ensure that pupils' long-term progress matches the good progress seen in lessons by:
 - securing greater consistency in the quality of feedback which teachers give to pupils
 - making sure that when teachers mark pupils' work they make very clear to them the next steps they need to take to improve their learning.

- Strengthen the school's contribution to community cohesion by providing more opportunities for pupils to interact directly with people from other communities, including communities abroad.