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Mrs P Fouracre
The Headteacher
Heathmere Primary School
Alton Road
Roehampton
London
SW15 4LJ

Dear Mrs Fouracre

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Heathmere Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 26 January 2012, for the time you gave to our preliminary meeting and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please also pass on my thanks to the governor, teachers and pupils who took the time to meet with me during the day.

There have been some changes to the school since its previous inspection. The school now has one and a half classes in each year group. As a result, there are three mixed-age classes for Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6 pupils, as well as six classes arranged in single year groups. The number of places for children in the Nursery has been increased. The assistant headteacher has been appointed temporarily to the post of deputy headteacher to cover maternity leave. The Chair of the Governing Body has recently resigned and governors are in the process of electing a new chairman.

As a result of the inspection on 11 and 12 May 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 satisfactory progress in making improvements.

Achievement of pupils at the school

At the previous inspection attainment was judged to be low. In 2011 attainment rose and was above the government floor standards for the first time in three years. Attainment in English was broadly in line with national averages, although overall

attainment in mathematics remained low. In the last year, school leaders have begun to focus more on improving achievement in mathematics. The school has introduced small group teaching in mathematics in Year 6 and provides individual tuition for older pupils who need it. This has resulted in improved rates of progress for many pupils. School leaders are confident that attainment in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 will rise this year. Elsewhere in the school, the school's tracking data and the work in pupils' books confirm the school's view that rates of progress are improving. However, achievement remains satisfactory overall. There are some year groups where teaching is consistently good and this results in good learning and progress for pupils. For example, in the Early Years Foundation Stage, most children make accelerated progress from starting points that are generally well below average. School leaders recognise that there is more to be done to build on these good foundations throughout Key Stage 1 and raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics for seven-year-olds. There are encouraging signs in the school's tracking data that the gap between the school and national average levels of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 will narrow in 2012.

The quality of teaching

Rigorous monitoring and determined tackling of underperformance have resulted in changes to teaching staff and improvements in the overall quality of teaching. Records of the school's monitoring of teaching indicate that there is an increasing proportion of good lessons. However, teaching is not yet consistently good across all year groups and in all subjects. Teachers generally plan appropriate activities for pupils of different abilities so that they are able to succeed in their learning. In the best lessons seen during the inspection, teachers had high expectations of their pupils. They made learning relevant and ensured that all the pupils were involved in each part of the lesson. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics group pupils were finding out how many hours it was until their next birthday. Pupils were encouraged to choose their own way of working out the total and then discussed this with the rest of the group. The teacher used skilful questioning that deepened pupils' understanding and enabled them to assess how effective their method was.

The marking of pupils' work has greatly improved and pupils say that they really like the 'two stars and a wish' system that celebrates what they have done well and gives them guidance on what could be improved. Teachers use their assessments of pupils' work to inform and adapt planning throughout each week. This ensures that lessons are generally pitched at the right level and that the pace of learning is maintained.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Some pupils attending the school have difficulty in managing their behaviour, but they are given good support both in and out of the classroom. The school's behaviour management procedures are clear and are consistently applied by all

staff. Pupils say they are confident that any problems that may occur will be dealt with promptly and fairly.

Efforts to improve levels of attendance since the last inspection have been concerted and effective. Attendance has improved so that it is now average. School leaders make good use of innovative approaches, such as the Friday 'In to Win' time, which rewards good attendance each week. Pupils say this is great fun and really makes them want to come to school every day. The school is continuing to liaise closely with the local authority education welfare officer to reduce levels of persistent absence even further.

The quality of leadership and management of the school

The capacity of the leaders has been strengthened by the development of middle leadership roles. Key subject leaders are now actively engaged in the drive for school improvement. They carry out monitoring of teachers' planning and of pupils' books and give feedback to teachers on where their practice could be improved. School leaders have continued to refine assessment systems and they monitor the progress of all groups of pupils rigorously. They identify any pupils at risk of underachievement and ensure that their needs are met through tailored additional support programmes. Governors continue to be supportive and are keen to develop their knowledge and understanding of the school's work. School improvement planning is focused on key priorities, has some measurable outcomes and clear lines of accountability. However, the current plan does not identify who will monitor the progress of each improvement priority and there are no formal opportunities for governors to be involved in this process.

The school has had effective support from the local authority to improve communication and language skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage and to help teachers develop their skills in the teaching of mathematics. An officer from the local authority has also carried out joint observations in lessons with the headteacher.

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

Melanie Knowles
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- By April 2011, accelerate pupils' progress and raise their attainment by ensuring that:
 - all teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - leaders at all levels monitor the impact of initiatives and ensure accountability at all levels.
- By April 2011, improve teaching so that it is consistently good by ensuring:
 - all teachers use assessment accurately on a day to day basis to plan effectively for the full range of pupils' abilities
 - leaders with immediate effect, ensure that all teachers mark work consistently and regularly so that pupils know what they need to do to improve.
- By April 2011, improve rates of attendance further by continuing to work with all those responsible for ensuring that pupils attend more regularly.