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Mr Patrick
Interim Headteacher
Oxhey Wood Primary School
Oxhey Drive
South Oxhey
Watford
WD19 7SL

Dear Mr Patrick

Notice to improve: monitoring inspection of Oxhey Wood Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your colleagues gave when I inspected your school on 13 June 2012 and for the information which you provided during the inspection. Please pass on my thanks to the consultant headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body, the headteacher designate and the deputy headteacher designate, all of whom found time to join the discussions.

The deputy headteacher who was acting headteacher at the time of the last inspection retires at the end of the summer. An experienced consultant headteacher was appointed on a part-time basis just before the previous inspection. The headteacher of a high performing primary school became interim headteacher on a part-time basis in January 2012. An experienced local headteacher has been appointed on a permanent basis from September 2012 and so has a new deputy headteacher. Six staff have left the school and their classes are currently being taught by supply staff. Six newly-qualified teachers take up post at the start of the new academic year.

As a result of the inspection on 18 October 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 is making **good progress** in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the pupils' achievement.

A robust assessment database provides evidence of a rising trend in pupils' progress since the spring term 2012 which has been enhanced in the current summer term. HMI scrutinised pupils' work in all the classes and found the standard of work an accurate match with the assessment data recorded. Attainment in mathematics is now rising as a result of the improvements secured in teaching that provide challenge and guidance in an appropriate mix of practical tasks. Similar

improvements are being made in English; however, this was a subject not mentioned in the previous report.

The 2011 Raise-on-Line was not available to the previous inspection team. HMI compared this data set with the detailed information now available on standards in Years 1 to 4. This would indicate that the Key Stage 1 data previously submitted to Ofsted is of questionable accuracy and that any Key Stage 1 to 2 value added calculation used when the school is re-inspected needs to be done with some care.

HMI observed six lessons or parts of lessons, all taught by permanent staff. The quality of teaching was satisfactory in each lesson and all contained a number of good features. The challenge and access provided was appropriate, and innovative activities engaged the pupils' attention. Questioning was often well directed and marking was good in every book reviewed. Pupils' cooperated well with their talk partners or in small groups and appropriate guidance was provided so that pupils could check their own work.

The improvements required in teaching, to allow pupils to make good progress, consistently relate to the more effective use of time and the connections made between starter activities and the main task to enable rapid progress. In some lessons, teaching assistants were not always deployed to best effect, and in others the ineffective use of new technology hindered pupils' progress. All teachers were provided with professional feedback by HMI.

The pupils' behaviour was good in every lesson; there have been no exclusions this academic year to date and attendance is close to the national average. Safeguarding and staff recruitment procedures meet current government requirements

The leadership team and the headteacher designate were invited to join HMI in the joint observation of teaching and the views they expressed matched the judgements given by the inspector. The lesson evidence forms completed by HMI were compared with the records of the school's monitoring evaluation of teaching which was judged to be precise and robust.

The professional guidance provided by senior leaders has had a clear impact on the quality of teaching and the progress made by pupils since January 2012. There are clear records of the improved performance of individual teachers who have followed the evaluative comments provided by senior staff. Performance management has been robust and half of the staff will be new in post in September 2012. A great deal has been achieved in less than two terms and it is clear that the previous inspection report may not have had sufficient space to reflect the full range of issues faced by the interim leadership team.

The local authority's statement of action was judged by Ofsted as fit for purpose. The two highly experienced local authority 'headteachers' who have been brought together to support the school have been very effective in managing the

improvements required and the support provided. In addition, the authority's statement of action has been well managed by a very experienced colleague; an example of school improvement 'best practice' in operation.

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
David Jones
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

Raise attainment, particularly in mathematics, so that most pupils are at national expectations by:

- always giving pupils work that is matched to their different capabilities and which challenges and extends them
- checking on the progress each pupil is making twice termly rather than through termly progress meetings
- providing pupils in all classes with clear guidance, through marking, of the next steps they need to take to improve their work
- devising more opportunities for pupils to give practical application to their numeracy skills in subjects other than mathematics.

Accelerate pupils' progress in lessons so that it is consistently good or better by:

- directing questions at girls and boys who are slower to volunteer rather than always taking answers from those who put their hands up
- making more effective use of 'talk partners' to engage pupils and develop their speaking and listening skills
- routinely expecting pupils to check their own and others' work, including spelling, punctuation and grammar
- recording pupils' feedback responses in lessons so that there is always follow-up when a pupil indicates they are unsure about their learning
- ensuring that leaders' monitoring is focused on pupils' learning and rates of progress.