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20 September 2012

Mrs Moira Cordon  
Headteacher  
Hawthorne Primary and Nursery School  
School Walk  
Bestwood Village  
Nottingham  
NG6 8TL

Dear Mrs Cordon

### **Notice to improve: monitoring inspection of Hawthorne Primary and Nursery School**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 19 September 2012 and for the information which you provided during the inspection. Please thank the Chair of the Governing Body for taking the time to talk to me and the pupils for their help during my visit.

There have been no changes to staffing since the previous inspection in January 2012.

As a result of the inspection on 11 January 2012, 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.

At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' achievement in English and mathematics has improved. In 2012, unvalidated data indicate that combined English and mathematics Level 4 and above results increased from 46% to 77%. The number of pupils achieving Level 5 and above in English and mathematics also increased from 12% to 23%. In mathematics, the number of pupils achieving Level 4 and above improved from 62% to 77% and those achieving Level 5 from 12% to 38%. In English, pupils achieving Level 4 and above improved from 65% to 100% and at Level 5 in from 23% to 37%. The proportion of pupils making two levels of progress has improved from 65% to 92.3%.

The school has effective tracking systems which quickly identify any child at risk of underperforming. Carefully tailored interventions are then put in place. The latest school tracking data indicate that all pupils, including those known to be eligible for free school meals or disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are making at least the expected progress. The school has used pupil premium funding to increase teaching assistant support. The school has also used this funding to engage a counselling service to work with vulnerable pupils. A parent support adviser has also been employed to work with vulnerable families, encouraging them to access parenting courses and Sure Start services. The school has begun to monitor the impact of these initiatives and, as a result, the attendance of two pupils has already improved. In addition, low-income families have been offered free places at weekly after-school sport sessions.

Behaviour and attendance in the first few weeks of school is good. Pupils have settled quickly into school routines. All staff are effective in ensuring pupils understand the school's ethos and expectations. Pupils said they felt safe and that rare occurrences of bullying were dealt with promptly.

Lessons observed during the inspection were at least good and pupils made good progress. This is because the school has taken effective action in identifying and tackling weaker aspects of teaching. Teachers' planning has improved. It now clearly identifies pupils' previous knowledge and takes account of different starting points. Teaching assistants are well deployed and understand how they contribute to pupils' effective learning. The mathematics curriculum has improved and teachers no longer 'cherry pick' the most interesting or easy-to-teach topics. Work builds appropriately on what pupils understand and can do. This allows pupils to practise new skills and consolidate their learning. Developments in the teaching of mathematics are reflected the new calculations policy. Teachers plan opportunities for pupils to use calculations in real-life situations across a range of subjects. Pupils' confidence in number work has greatly increased. For example, in the Eco club, pupils confidently analysed a wide range of data to evaluate how the school is reducing its waste and making more efficient use of energy.

Pupils enjoy learning and settle well in lessons. The pace of learning in lessons has also increased. Younger pupils quickly 'leave the mat' and move on to the main part of the lesson. In a numeracy lesson in the Early Years Foundation Stage, higher attaining children had a short introduction before getting on with a task independently while the teacher worked through examples with the rest of the class. This ensured a good level of challenge for all children. Teachers confidently model work and pupils use these strategies to help their understanding. In lessons, pupils understand what they are going to learn and what they need to do to be successful. Skilful questioning encourages pupils to explain their thinking and helps teachers to identify any gaps in understanding, which are then promptly addressed.

Marking of pupils' work and feedback have improved and are consistent. Pupils know how to improve their work and are able to identify the next steps in their learning.

Marking is linked to pupils' individual learning targets. Staff encourage pupils to use these targets to help them improve their work. Teaching assistants encourage pupils to think carefully about their work and help to keep them focused on completing tasks.

The headteacher, senior leadership team and staff are determined to improve the quality of education for their pupils. Everyone works together well. Training has been used effectively to increase staff confidence in teaching mathematics. In part, this stems from the passion and enthusiasm of the mathematics coordinator. The whole school enjoy the weekly 'maths challenges'. Senior leaders have looked closely at class groupings to ensure that they provide the best opportunity for pupils to be successful. Monitoring procedures have been tightened up. The school improvement plan is closely linked to staff training and support. The plan ensures that there are measurable targets to improve the learning and progress of all pupils. The school has worked effectively with the local authority and the Local Leader of Education to ensure a secure view of how well it is doing. Performance management systems and teaching action plans provide quantifiable targets for all teachers.

The governing body has a secure view of how the school is performing. They have benefitted from additional training and have developed their committee structure to better hold the school to account. Safeguarding procedures meet all the latest statutory requirements.

The effective support provided by the local authority and the Local Leader of Education has been carefully tailored to meet the needs of the school. The local authority's action plan is fit for purpose and provides a clear and measurable set of actions closely linked to the school's needs.

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

Michelle Parker  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in January 2012**

- Raise pupils' achievement across the school, particularly in Key Stage 2, by improving the quality of teaching, so that at least 85% is consistently good or better by February 2013, by:
  - ensuring that the pace of teaching and learning and the level of challenge is better matched to the needs of different groups of pupils, particularly lower attaining pupils
  - ensuring that teachers consistently use effective questioning techniques to support their assessment of pupils' learning in lessons
  - ensuring that all teachers model and/or explain new or familiar concepts clearly to pupils.
  
- Improve the curriculum by ensuring that pupils are frequently able to practise, apply and improve their mathematical skills, particularly calculation in other areas of learning.
  
- Improve the effectiveness of leaders' and managers' evaluations of the school's progress by sharpening school action plans to ensure that they:
  - focus more closely on improving the achievement of different groups of underperforming pupils and link individual actions to a measurable intended impact upon pupils' learning and progress
  - provide clear milestones, stating the intervals at which actions will be monitored and who will monitor them.