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4 December 2012

Miss J Digweed  
Headteacher  
The Iver Village Junior School  
High Street  
Iver  
Buckinghamshire  
SL0 9QA

Dear Miss Digweed

### **Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to The Iver Village Junior School**

Following my visit to your school on Tuesday 4 December 2012, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on the findings of my visit. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in September 2012. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and the school council. A range of documentation was scrutinised, including the school development plan, minutes of governing body meetings and monitoring evidence. A small sample of pupils' work was scrutinised.

### **Context**

Since the inspection, one teacher has left and the school is in the process of appointing a replacement. This class is currently being taught by a supply teacher. An inclusion manager has been appointed for one day per week, increasing to three days per week from January.

## **Main findings**

The new headteacher and deputy headteacher have welcomed the outcomes of the inspection and are taking swift and determined action to address the weaknesses identified. Governors and senior leaders are pleased that the school is now no longer the subject of a category of concern, but recognise that there is still a lot to do before they can be judged as good.

Suitable plans have been drawn up to improve the quality of teaching and learning, although criteria against which the success of planned actions can be measured and evaluated are not precise enough.

The school has rightly identified improving the curriculum as the key to achieving improvements in teaching so that pupils are more fully engaged in their learning. Plans are at an advanced stage to introduce in January a topic-based curriculum that is enriched and more effectively focused on meeting the needs of pupils. Topic weeks have been trialled and pupils say that they enjoyed their lessons much more during these. However, curriculum plans do not provide sufficient detail about the strategies that teachers will use to improve pupils' spelling and calculation skills.

Pupil progress meetings and newly introduced systems to monitor teaching and lesson planning are more rigorous because they are effectively holding teachers to account. They provide teachers with clear indications of strengths and areas to improve. They demonstrate that although there are some residual weaknesses, a good start has been made in ensuring that assessment is being used well to plan activities and that teaching is challenging pupils, especially the more able.

Good progress has been made in improving pupils' behaviour and safety. The pupils themselves say that they feel safer and more confident that the school is tackling bullying effectively. They say that they are enjoying lessons more and that behaviour in class has improved as a result. Attendance is improving and activities such as the anti-bullying week have been welcomed by pupils.

Governors know the school well and have provided sharply focused challenge and support during the time that the school required significant improvement. They have suitable plans for holding leaders to account, although these are not yet fully embedded. They recognise that they now need to develop a longer term strategic approach towards supporting the school on its improvement journey.

Senior leaders and governors have begun to take effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. Following the visit to the school, HMI recommend that further action is taken to:

- tweak improvement plans to ensure that they include precise and measureable criteria against which governors can judge how successful actions have been to improve pupils' achievement.
- ensure that strategies for improving pupils' spelling and calculation skills are more clearly detailed in improvement plans.
- work with the local authority to further strengthen the governing body's strategic planning.

Ofsted will continue to monitor the school until its next section 5 inspection.

### **External support**

The local authority has worked effectively with the headteacher and governors to develop a training and support plan which is well-tailored to meet the school's needs and which complements the school's own improvement plans. Specific training has been provided already, for example in assessment, but since most of the support has yet to be delivered, it is too soon to judge the impact of the plan.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Buckinghamshire.

Yours sincerely

Chris Nye  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**