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11 January 2013

Ms Emma Dawson
Headteacher
Thundersley Primary School
Hart Road
Thundersley
Benfleet
SS7 3PT

Dear Ms Dawson

Notice to improve: monitoring inspection of Thundersley Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 10 January 2013 and for the information which you provided during the inspection. Please give my thanks to the members of the governing body who found time to join the discussions.

One new experienced staff and two newly qualified teachers were appointed to the school on 1 September 2012 to replace colleagues who left at the end of August. One internal appointment was made at the same time to the literacy team.

As a result of the inspection on 26 April 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 satisfactory progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the pupils' achievement.

The results of the 2012 Early Years Foundation Stage profile, Year 1 reading tests, Year 2 teacher assessments and Year 6 national tests reveal that variations in standards and pupil progress remain. Since September 2012, the school's assessment database shows improvements in pupils' progress in reading and mathematics. This matches the increasing proportion of good teaching seen on this inspection. However, weaknesses remain in the pupils' writing across all year groups. The school must be able to show that pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics compares favourably with national figures by the time of the next inspection.

HMI conducted eight joint observations with senior leaders and found teaching to be good or better on five occasions. This is a notable improvement on the previous

inspection report. Where teaching was good, lessons were challenging and the teacher focused on requiring pupils to think their way through the task provided. In those lessons that required improvement, teachers either talked too much or did not organise learning sufficiently well to provide consistent challenge.

The pupils' behaviour was good where teaching provided consistent challenge but some individuals drifted quietly off task when they were not being directly involved in the lesson.

The headteacher and senior team have taken effective action to strengthen teaching. HMI invited senior leaders to join him in the observation of teaching and the views they expressed matched the judgements given by the inspector. The school needs to provide the governing body with examples of full lesson evaluations that reflect good or better teaching so that governors can check these against the Ofsted criteria. The school failed to provide a full set of the 2012 Key Stage 2 test results to the Department of Education by the required deadline.

The local authority statement of action was judged by Ofsted to be fit for purpose. Joint action by the headteacher and the local authority has helped to secure improvements in the quality of teaching.

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 April 2012

- Raise achievement and accelerate pupils' progress, particularly in writing and mathematics, by:
 - fully implementing and evaluating the impact of the initiative to improve writing
 - developing greater opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in literacy and numeracy across the curriculum.
- By April 2013, increase the proportion of good and better teaching by:
 - improving the use of assessment information to ensure that all groups of pupils are challenged by tasks that are well matched to their learning needs so that they make good or better progress
 - improving the quality of guidance to pupils about how to improve their work, so that marking regularly indicates the next steps in their learning
 - ensuring that pupils always respond to the guidance they receive.
- Strengthen the impact of leadership and management by:
 - developing the role of middle leaders so that they hold staff more to account for pupils' attainment and progress
 - increasing the involvement of the governing body so that its members use data to challenge and support the school and to hold leaders to account.