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22 May 2007

Mr Gordon Cunningham
The Headteacher
Easthampstead Park School
Ringmead
Bracknell
RG12 8FS

Dear Mr Cunningham

Ofsted Monitoring of Schools with Notice to Improve

Thank you for the help, which you and your staff gave when Lynne Kaufman and I inspected your school on 15 May 2007, for the time you gave to our telephone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during our visit. Please also pass my thanks to your governors and the pupils who spent time talking to us.

This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website. Please inform the Regional Inspection Service Provider of any factual inaccuracies within 24 hours of the receipt of this letter.

As a result of the inspection in September 2006, the school was asked to:

- ensure that the curriculum in the sixth form is matched to the needs of the students and monitor their progress effectively
- raise the quality of teaching and the progress of pupils in mathematics throughout the school
- improve the progress of the most able pupils in Years 7 to 9
- improve the use made of assessment data by teachers in planning lessons and by senior managers in decision making.

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' achievements.

The new headteacher and deputy headteacher along with a restructured senior leadership team have been vigorous in pursuit of the improvements required at the last full school inspection in September 2006. A significant number of initiatives and structures are now firmly in place but it is not yet possible to see the impact of all of these changes on pupils' achievements, hence the judgement of satisfactory progress. Governors have a much clearer view of the school's progress and named governors have a responsibility for each of the key issues identified in the inspection report.

Good progress has been made in setting in place half-termly course assessments for sixth form students, enabling clear tracking of their progress. Students in danger of under-performing are now quickly identified and a well-structured monitoring system put in place, involving subject staff, tutors, the assistant head of sixth form and ultimately the head of the sixth form. This rigorous system ensures that students are counselled appropriately if they slip behind in their studies. Suitable action has been taken to provide an induction for students at the beginning of Year 13, in addition to Year 12, making sure that they are on the correct course and understand fully its requirements. Agreement has been reached with other local schools and the further education college that, from September 2007, their timetables will be synchronised, allowing students greater flexibility in choosing a fuller range of subjects.

Changes made in the staffing of mathematics mean that the department is now well led, although there is still variability in the quality of mathematics teaching across the school. Significant help has been provided to individual teachers, including coaching, close observation and individual professional development plans for all teachers in the department. This has been well led internally and with expert and well-balanced support from the local authority and an advanced skills teacher. It is not yet possible to judge the impact this will have on standards in mathematics longer term but improvements have been made in relation to mathematical investigations.

The talented, able and gifted pupils have been effectively identified at an early stage using diagnostic tests. The two co-ordinators with particular responsibility have trialled a range of innovative programmes to extend the learning of these pupils. For example, 'opening minds', which challenges pupils in their thinking and problem solving skills. Pupils reported that they appreciated the range of activities organised for them outside normal lesson times. However, in the limited number of observations that were made on this inspection the work expected of the most able pupils within lessons and in top sets was still often insufficiently challenging. The headteacher has ensured that a significant number of lesson observations have taken place over the last two terms by senior staff as well as heads of department; these have been insufficiently focused on the challenge provided for the most able in lessons.

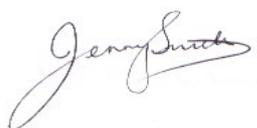
A significant bespoke training programme has been put in place, led by the local authority to ensure that heads of department and middle managers fully comprehend the importance and use of data to inform their lessons. Many heads of department, but not all, have availed themselves of this well structured programme. Key assessment information is now regularly collated, forming a similar pupil tracking system to that in the sixth form. This is beginning to highlight where pupils are falling short, so that speedy action can be taken. Although it has potential, it is too early to say how effective this will be in raising standards in the future. Teachers possess current records of their pupils' progress but not all of them are using this information effectively to planning their lessons. The school has installed, and is making good use of, the most up-to-date School Information and Management System for assessment. Academic mentoring has been introduced and two sessions

have taken place. Comments from parents after the first session were listened to and improvements made. There is evidence that pupils and parents have found this, and the weekly newsletter, very helpful in improving home school communication.

The local authority has planned very effectively with the school and has provided well-structured and appropriately targeted support from officers and consultants.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jenny Smith". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Jenny Smith
Her Majesty's Inspector