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30 October 2007

Mrs V Squires
The Headteacher
Nursery Hill Primary School
Ansley Common
Nuneaton
CV10 OPY

Dear Mrs Squires

Ofsted monitoring of schools with a Notice to Improve

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 16 October 2007, for the time you gave to our phone discussions, and for the information which you provided before and during my visit.

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 on January 2007, the school was asked to:

- improve pupils' progress and the standards they attain in writing
- ensure that the monitoring and evaluation of provision focuses sharply on outcomes for pupils and leads to the right actions for improvement
- provide all pupils with clear guidance to help them to improve their performance.

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 pupils' overall achievement.

Since the inspection in January 2007 there have been some changes which the school has managed well. The falling numbers and the consequent reduction in staff have meant that the Nursery and Reception children and those in Years 5 and 6 are taught in mixed age classes. The school has been successful in improving the opportunities pupils have in developing their writing skills across a number of subjects. The rate of progress pupils make is now being measured in more detail. Tests taken at the end of the summer term show that in Years 1 to 6 a significant number of pupils made satisfactory progress, with a growing number making good progress across mathematics, science and particularly in English.

The school has responded positively to the findings of the last inspection. A number of improvements has helped to give pupils a more positive attitude to learning. Pupils

respond responsibly to encouragement, behave well and have a positive attitude to their work and each other. The school has established a timetable of monitoring to check the quality of teaching and learning which would indicate teaching was predominately good with satisfactory elements. However, the outcomes of this monitoring visit found more teaching to be satisfactory rather than good. Senior leaders have strengthened teaching and have improved systems for assessing and tracking pupils' progress. The literacy lessons observed focused more sharply on what individual pupils should achieve through a varied and engaging range of learning activities. This has led to better pupils' learning and progress over time.

The school's assessment data indicates that significantly more pupils are now on course to meet age related targets by the end of the year. Many pupils have made good progress in writing as part of the recent literacy focus. However, there is still some variability between pupils' rates of progress in different classes. This is due partly to the inconsistent application of the recently developed marking policy across the school. Teachers know what levels the pupils are working at in English, mathematics and science, and the standards they should achieve. These are not always shared with the pupils because of the school's concerns that social factors would affect their already low self esteem. However, most pupils know their targets and understand what they need to do to improve because they are provided with clear individual and class targets to help them to improve their performance. Marking in some books is good and helps pupils to understand what they need to do to further improve their work but the approach is not consistent across the year groups. In some classes learning objectives and individual targets are not always made clear to pupils and verbal feedback, which is part of the assessment, is not always recorded.

Leadership and management have now been strengthened. The roles of the subject leaders for literacy, mathematics and science have developed and are now good. They make generally effective use of data to track pupils' progress and to inform suitably targeted support for pupils at risk of underachieving. As a team, the headteacher and senior teachers have guided the staff effectively over the last eight months, and have successfully focused on raising achievement. Staff are clear about the higher expectations and have worked hard to raise achievement. Systems for monitoring and evaluating the school's work are more rigorous and are now soundly based on accurate assessment data. The work of the governing body is more sharply focused on pupils' standards and achievement and more thorough procedures are developing to hold the school to account.

The local authority has provided a suitable balance of support and challenge which has enabled the school to make satisfactory progress since its last inspection. The school speaks highly of the encouragement and training it has received. Effective support has been provided for the school's leadership through regular monitoring and evaluation by the local authority, particularly of teaching and learning. However, the local authority recognises that more work is needed to raise overall standards.

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

Yours sincerely

Rashida Sharif
Her Majesty's Inspector