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Mr Paul Clayton
The Headteacher
Heathfield Junior School
Cobbett Road
Twickenham
TW2 6EN

Dear Mr Clayton

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 17 March 2008. Thank you for the time you gave to our telephone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the visit. Please pass on my thanks to the staff and pupils who met with 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 June 2007 the school was asked to

- Raise achievement and standards in English, mathematics and science across the school
- Improve the proportion of good teaching by ensuring activities in lessons are always challenging
- Strengthen the impact of leadership and management through extending systems for robust monitoring and evaluation across all aspects of the school's work.

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' achievement.

The acting head teacher and deputy headteacher have rightly focused on improving the skills of teachers. This focus, underpinned by the sound package of support provided by the local authority, has resulted in improvements in the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. Teaching is satisfactory, and the pockets of good practice noted in the previous report are more widespread. The school's systems for checking on pupils' progress have become embedded since the last inspection and are shared with both staff and pupils. This is having a positive effect on developing teachers' and pupils' understanding of what needs to happen in order to raise standards. A regular programme of lesson monitoring is now in place and a considerable number of observations have been carried out. Written feedback

from these observations is thorough and detailed, with helpful pointers for further improvement. As a result, pupils are now making satisfactory, and sometimes good, gains in their learning in lessons.

Pupils have noticed the improvements in the quality of teaching. They commented that their lessons are often fun. Consequently, they say that pupils' behaviour is better. However, some still feel that some lessons are 'too easy' and that those who find work easier are not always challenged in their learning.

There has been extensive monitoring of other areas, such as the quality of work in pupils' books. Inconsistencies remain, however, in the quality of marking and presentation, and some work is still not being pitched at the right level of challenge for all pupils. Overall, this monitoring and development is leading to improvement. More pupils are now making satisfactory or better progress in lessons. However, there is still a legacy of underachievement and standards remain low, particularly in Years 4 and 5.

At an individual level, pupils have targets to aim for in literacy, and in some classes, in numeracy and science. In some exercise books, targets are clearly displayed but they are missing from others. The extent to which teachers focus on pupils' targets varies considerably. In marking pupils' work, for example, targets are sometimes not considered and, in addition, corrections are not used as a tool for improvement. This inconsistency was reflected in pupils' responses when asked about what they need to do to improve their work. In some cases, they could not remember their targets, and in others, they only knew them in one subject.

After a turbulent time over the last 18 months – the school has had five head teachers – a number of long term options are being considered for the future leadership and management of the school. The acting head teacher and deputy head have introduced satisfactory systems for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. Whilst the monitoring of progress is good and the sharing of this information is now firmly embedded, other areas such as the scrutiny of pupils' work and the setting of individual targets are not as secure. Whilst practice in these areas is being checked there are still inconsistencies amongst staff and these aspects of the school's work are not as robust as they should be.

The impact of the support provided by the local authority is sound. Effective action has been taken to challenge and support the school in strengthening its leadership structure. Appropriate support has also been provided to develop teachers' subject knowledge and understanding of good teaching and learning.

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

Yours sincerely

Sue Vale
Additional Inspector