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4 June 2008

Ms Carol Koerner
The Headteacher
Sharps Copse Primary and Nursery School
Prospect Lane
Havant
PO9 5PE

Dear Ms Koerner

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 21 May 2008, for the time you gave to our discussions and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. Please pass my thanks to your staff and pupils for making me feel welcome in your school.

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 13 and 14 September 2007, the school was asked to:

- Raise standards and improve achievement in English and mathematics.
- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that lesson activities are closely matched to the needs of the pupils so that they are always challenged to do their best.
- Improve tracking systems so that they give clear information on pupils rates of progress so that the senior leadership team has a clear view of standards and progress across the school and uses the information to set realistic challenging targets.
- Ensure pupils have sharply focused individual targets and clear guidance on how to improve their work so that teachers can accurately plan their learning in order to move them on more quickly.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making good progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the pupils' achievement.

Early indication from teacher assessments at Key Stage 1 is that the school will be close to its targets for 2008, even though the standards in English and mathematics are well below national average. There is however, still some variation in how well pupils have performed in different classes. Some classes have done better than others because of the greater consistency of good teaching.

Although achievement is better at the top end of the school, because of improved teaching, the legacy of past underperformance means that for this year, and possibly the next, pupils will not reach national expected standards. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are well below average. However, pupils are now making good progress in class because of an improved focus on teaching which makes good use of the assessment data about individual pupils.

Teaching has improved overall and all lessons observed were good. This matches well with the local authority and senior management monitoring. This improved teaching, is leading to improved progress in class. More lessons are well planned and sharply focussed on the things pupils need to learn. Teachers have good subject knowledge and this together with the improved assessment and tracking information has enabled teachers to gauge more accurately when pupils are not making enough progress. Additional support by the teaching assistants and the focus on supporting the pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities, by a range of withdrawal methods and nurturing groups, has enabled the school to rightly focus support to those who need it most. At the top end of the school pupils are taught in ability groups for mathematics and English so that they can get the right support to enable them to improve. The school is working hard to eliminate weaknesses in teaching and, where this still occurs, give teachers additional support and training. Questioning of pupils is effective and has improved. It is better matched to pupils needs because teachers have a clearer idea of where pupils are in their individual learning. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. The well planned lessons and good delivery ensure that pupils are developing social skills and early literacy and numeracy. This will enable them to build upon these core skills well in the future and further eradicate the underachievement of the past.

The school now tracks pupils' progress over time more thoroughly and pupils take annual assessments twice a year. The procedures for this have been improved and now give clear indications of the small steps pupils are making in their work. This information is used more effectively in the classroom to plan more appropriate activities which will improve pupils' progress. Most pupils are making at least satisfactory progress over time and the school knows which pupils are not making adequate progress. This information now informs teachers planning more effectively and pupils know what is expected of them in classroom. The lesson objective is shared with pupils at the beginning of the lesson and reviewed at the end. Pupils spoke about knowing what their targets were and whether they were meeting these. Members of the governing body have been assisting the school in monitoring whether pupils know their targets or not. The oldest pupils had a clear idea of what they would achieve at the end of Key Stage tests.

Marking of work has improved and the senior leadership team have been monitoring its use across the school. The school knows from its assessment data which pupils are making the slowest progress. Pupils can describe how they evaluate their own work and whether they can find strategies to solve problems particularly when they find the work difficult.

The LA statement of action was judged to be satisfactory and the school has received two monitoring visits by the School Improvement Partner and District

Manager as outlined in the action plan. It has an effective strategy for evaluating impact in that it expects a closer match by 2008 between the estimated attainment of pupils based upon their prior attainment and range of ability.

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 "Linda Kelsey".

Linda Kelsey
Her Majesty's Inspector