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28 November 2008

The Headteacher
Oakview Primary School
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Dear Mrs Davies

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 10 November, for the time you gave to our telephone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during my visit.

This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

As a result of the inspection on 4-5 March 2008, the school was asked to improve: the progress pupils make in English and mathematics; the pace and challenge of lessons; the proportion of good teaching available; the quality of provision in the Foundation Stage. In addition the governors and the local authority were asked to ensure that planned refurbishments were completed.

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 inspection of March 2008 judged that the quality of provision in the Foundation Stage was inadequate and identified significant weaknesses in teaching in other year groups. These matters have been appropriately addressed and provision is now well organised. Teaching and learning in nursery and reception groups are satisfactory and appropriate use is made of adult managed learning opportunities. Morning routines are effective and children settle quickly into well focussed activities. The school's 2008 Foundation Stage profile indicates that children entered the school with a profile of abilities below those expected for their age, particularly in communication, language and literacy. .

Towards the end of the first academic year in this new school the pupils undertook teacher assessments in Year 2 and the national tests for pupils aged 11. The unvalidated outcomes of the Key Stage 1 teacher assessments indicate that overall standards were below those expected for the pupils' ages and weak writing skills were the key issue. The performance of white British boys was a concern.

The provisional outcomes of the 2008 Key Stage 2 national tests indicate that standards in English, mathematics and science varied considerably. They are likely to be above or even well above the national average in science, in line with national expectations in reading, below average in writing (significantly below for boys) and below average in mathematics. Out of the 52 pupils who took the tests 14 had either a range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities or a history of poor attendance. A small number were at an early stage of learning to speak English.

Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI) reviewed the work of pupils in Year 2 to 6. All are now provided with tasks that are appropriate to those of average ability. Work is marked regularly and the pupils' books are generally well presented. Writing skills show the greatest variations with weaknesses in the use of subject specific language and descriptive writing.

The school's assessment data base indicates that boys perform less well than girls in reading and writing across the school. The data indicates that the level of challenge provided for the more able pupils at both Key Stage 1 and 2 remains inconsistent. The guided reading sessions observed did not involve all pupils with many of the pupils only asked to illustrate some aspect of a story.

HMI visited nine classes across all year groups. Teaching and learning were satisfactory or better in seven lessons and good or better in three of these. Members of the senior management team were invited to accompany HMI in the joint observation of lessons. The detailed analysis of learning during a discussion with senior managers, highlighted areas where very effective teaching was improving learning but also where tasks were not well matched to the pupils' learning needs. The views expressed by staff in these sessions concurred with the judgements given by HMI.

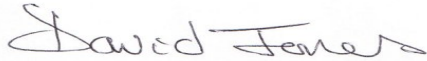
The best teaching provided very clear instruction often derived from effective questioning, high expectations and good use of appropriate resources. An excellent question and answer session in Year 1 used pupil responses very effectively and enabled the teacher to draw all of the pupils into the learning objective. Similarly, the very effective instruction provided for pupils in a Year 4 mathematics lesson helped pupils complete multi-step calculations using a programmable calculator. In those lessons where the quality of learning could have been developed further, the teachers' choice of tasks or examples did not provide sufficient clarity to enable pupils to make the progress of which they were capable. Some lesson introductions were too long to provide clarity and engagement.

A review was conducted with the headteacher of the premises issues highlighted in the March 2008 inspection report. The local authority (LA) school improvement partner has undertaken to work with the headteacher to seek a resolution of these matters. These long standing issues relating to damp in some areas of the building and unfinished work in others reflect poorly on the LA private sector partner. The LA's statement of action, the action plan and the support provided for the school is

good. The headteacher and the LA school improvement partner are of the view that variations in the quality of teaching need to be eliminated and that the pupils' writing skills remain a concern. HMI concur with these views.

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

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Jones". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.

Her Majesty's Inspector