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Mrs Jacquie Sainsbury
Brookhill Leys Primary and Nursery School
Chewton Street
Eastwood
Nottingham
NG16 3HB

Dear Mrs Sainsbury

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 Tuesday 23 March 2010 and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. Please pass on my thanks to the pupils, staff, the chair of governors for the time she gave to our telephone discussion, and the school's advisor who met with me.

Since the inspection in October 2009, the school has experienced high levels of absence at senior leadership level. To support the headteacher, governors appointed an acting deputy headteacher and an acting assistant head teacher in January 2010. A number of temporary teachers have been covering the absence of permanent staff. During this inspection, four of the 12 classes were being taught by temporary teachers. In January 2010, the local authority put in place informal arrangements for staff from Wadsworth Primary School to provide a range of support for staff at Brookhill Leys.

As a result of the inspection on 14 and 15 October 2009, the school was asked to do the following:

- Ensure that all statutory requirements for the safeguarding of pupils are met.
- Raise attainment in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6 by regularly monitoring the progress of pupils and putting in place effective support for individuals or groups.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is good or better by improving the use of assessment to plan activities which meet the needs of all groups and by ensuring marking informs pupils about the steps they need to take to improve.
- Improve the effectiveness of governors in holding the school to account for its 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 the pupils' achievement.

The headteacher and governors have taken swift action to ensure the school meets statutory requirements for the safeguarding of pupils. All adults who have contact with pupils at the school have had the necessary checks. Governors are in the process of developing procedures for regularly checking and evaluating policies for securing the health and safety of pupils.

Systems for monitoring pupils' progress have improved. The headteacher and acting deputy headteacher review the performance of pupils every half term. They use this information well to identify pupils who would benefit from additional support. For instance, senior leaders have identified where weaknesses in teaching and a number of changes in teachers have hampered achievement in some classes. By implementing a programme of targeted support, they are ensuring that pupils in these classes are now making sufficient progress. The latest school assessment information and inspection evidence confirms that progress is accelerating and standards are rising in all year groups. Pupils are making satisfactory progress. Some are making good progress. The proportion of Year 6 pupils on track to attain national expectations has increased from the previous year in English and mathematics. In general, standards in mathematics and reading are broadly average. They are below average in writing. The school is aware of this and has recently introduced a more structured approach to the teaching of this subject. This is beginning to have a positive impact because writing standards are rising from a low base. There is still more to do to ensure more able pupils reach the standards of which they are capable.

The quality of teaching has strengthened. There has been a marked increase in the proportion of good teaching and a reduction in inadequate teaching. Pupils told the inspector that lessons are more interesting and fun. Senior leaders, in partnership with Wadsworth school and local authority advisors and consultants, have introduced new ways of working. Senior leaders regularly monitor the quality of teaching and meet with teachers to hold them to account for the performance of pupils in their class. Most staff have been receptive to this increased level of challenge. The majority of teaching observed during this inspection was satisfactory or better. The headteacher is taking effective action to tackle the remaining weaknesses in teaching.

Teachers are making better use of assessment information. There is a greater emphasis on planning for all ability groups. In one effective example, the teacher told a story about an alien and provided different ability pupils with suitably challenging activities. Pupils responded to their writing task with enthusiasm and made accelerated progress. Although teachers plan activities for them, the more able pupils sometimes have to complete activities set for other groups before moving onto more challenging work. This slows down the progress they make. The school



has recently introduced a new 'bubble and block' system for marking pupils' work. In addition to acknowledging what pupils have achieved, teachers are beginning to provide pupils with the precise guidance they need to improve.

Governors are supportive. They have recently completed an audit of their skills and identified training needs. Governors are beginning to hold the school to account for the performance of pupils by asking more challenging questions during meetings. Some governors are checking the work of the school for themselves.

The statement of action produced by the local authority following the last inspection has been evaluated. It meets requirements. The local authority and staff from Wadsworth school have provided a wide range of support. The impact of this support has been satisfactory. Staff from Brookhill Leys have particularly appreciated the opportunity to work alongside other senior leaders, teachers and consultants to develop their practice.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Usha Devi
Her Majesty's Inspector