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Friday 25 June 2010

Mr Stephen Kite and Mr Paul Seeman  
Co-headteachers  
Edmund de Moundeford VC Primary School, Feltwell  
The Beck  
Feltwell  
Thetford  
IP26 4DB

Dear Mr Kite and Mr Seeman

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 24 June 2010, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. I should be grateful if you would also give my thanks to the pupils and staff with whom I spoke and to the governors I met and the School Improvement Partner.

A new headteacher has been appointed to lead the school, from September 2010.

As a result of the inspection on 11-12 November 2009, the school was asked to:

- increase the impact of teaching and learning on raising standards and promoting progress by better matching activities to pupils' needs, by ensuring that pupils know exactly what they should be learning, and by improving curriculum provision including the teaching of literacy and numeracy throughout the curriculum
- improve leadership and management by improving the rigour and impact of the monitoring process, the accuracy of self-evaluation and by ensuring that governance meets statutory requirements
- improve the outdoor play area for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that it meets requirements and children are able to choose freely between activities indoor and out.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school has made satisfactory progress in making improvements.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The standards they are reaching are average and they are making satisfactory progress. Pupils' attendance was showing decline but is now improving, though it is still low.



The curriculum has been adapted so there are now more opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. There are good examples of where other subjects, for example history and geography are used as vehicles for the development of extended writing. The work is marked thoroughly with a clear emphasis on improving literacy skills. In addition some longer blocks of time have been devoted to extended writing. Numeracy is developed in subjects such as science, geography and information and communication technology. The effect of this is that, although progress in writing in Years 5 and 6 is still patchy, it is improving and there is clear evidence of improvement in other years.

The understanding by pupils of what they will learn is becoming clearer. In lessons seen, learning objectives were generally well-considered and effectively communicated to pupils so they understood what it is they were to do and how it would develop their learning. There were also some good examples of where work was better matched to pupils' prior knowledge, though this is inconsistent. For example, in some work on persuasive writing, pupils were asked to write some persuasive words, while higher attaining pupils were asked to produce some persuasive text. Although a good example of questioning being used to probe understanding was seen during the inspection, the use of questions as a means of assessment in lessons are under-used. However, there is some very good practice in assessment through marking, with very well-matched follow-up tasks set as a result. For example the marking of a piece of writing of a play suggested writing more detail in stage directions. This was then set this as an objective in the next piece of work which was achieved well. In one piece of extended writing, pupils were asked to develop different aspects of their writing, such as the use of adjectives and similes for example. This had a good effect on the pupils' writing.

Leaders now monitor teaching, lesson plans, pupils' work and the progress they are making more frequently. The evidence from the inspection shows that the assessments, for example of writing, are largely accurate. For one year group however, some assessments have shown anomalies, with some pupils apparently becoming much worse in their writing in the course of a term and then one term later making large advances. As a result the school's leaders have made a change to the method of assessment for next year. The written records of the evaluation of teaching quality place more emphasis on what the teacher does, rather than the impact of teaching on learning and progress. The judgements about teaching quality, that it is largely good, are not in keeping with the satisfactory progress being made by pupils. However, the judgements made by school leaders during the inspection were accurate.

Governors have now ratified their policies on community cohesion and equal opportunities. They are now monitoring the impact of the policies.

The outdoor play area for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage has been improved by the installation of a safer surface that does not become waterlogged



when it rains. Plans have been submitted for approval to allow significant changes to the building so that pupils can move between indoors and outdoors unimpeded, but safely.

The local authority's action plan had omissions initially. It has now been amended and meets requirements. The local authority's support for the school has been satisfactory.

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

Alan Alder  
Her Majesty's Inspector



Once the school has had 24 hours to report any factual inaccuracies, the post-visit letter is copied as appropriate to the following:

- Appropriate authority - chair of governors/Interim Executive Board
- Local authority – except for academies
- For the Secretary of State use the following email address:  
[CausingConcern.schools@dcf.gov.uk](mailto:CausingConcern.schools@dcf.gov.uk) )
- Contractor providing support services on behalf of the local authority - where appropriate
- Diocese – for voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools

A copy with editing marked up should be forwarded to the:

Lead inspector