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Mrs Lesley Lewis
Shelley Primary School
Milton Crescent
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Dear Mrs Lewis

Notice to improve: monitoring inspection of Shelley Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 22 March 2011 and for the information which you provided during the inspection. Please pass on my thanks to the staff who gave up part of their lunch hour to join me in a meeting.

Two permanent members of staff left the school in the term following the inspection: they were initially replaced by supply staff. The school appointed a number of newly qualified teachers in September 2010 and an experienced teacher joins the staff at the beginning of the summer term.

As a result of the inspection on 29 September 2010, the school was asked to address the most important areas for improvement which are set out in the annex to this letter.

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.

Standards are rising and pupil progress is improving. The small numbers of pupils in each year group made it possible for HMI to conduct a scrutiny of the pupils' work and compare this with the assessment data base being compiled by the school. Pupil progress in English is appropriate but that in mathematics is more variable. A similar picture emerged from a recently completed and well-documented local authority review. The headteacher is developing plans to enhance the Year 6 pupils' literacy and numeracy skills before the 2011 national tests. The progress of pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage has improved, with notable progress being made in the children's communication, language and literacy skills. At the next inspection, it will be vital for the school to be able to show that all pupils are making appropriate

progress and that intervention/support is tailored to the needs identified from a robust assessment data base.

Teaching has been stabilised after a period of considerable change. HMI conducted the joint observation of all staff with the headteacher: her monitoring and evaluation of teaching is accurate. Teaching was appropriately focused on the pupils' learning needs and often provided useful challenge. Time was not always used to the greatest effect and the quality of questioning remains inconsistent. Although staff are largely inexperienced, marking is appropriate and consistent, often providing useful guidance on how the pupils could improve. In the classroom, the most effective teaching provided brisk opportunities for pupils to work with their 'talk partners' and topic guidance was clear. Learning support staff were present in all classes and provided useful small group support and instruction on how to improve.

Efforts have been made to increase the breadth of curriculum experiences available with greater use being made of the outside learning area in the Reception class. A recently completed local study provided helpful opportunities for pupils to write for different purposes and audiences, but this type of literacy challenge remains under-developed. Volunteers and teaching assistants have been trained to lead a structured assessment of reading skills. HMI found time during this inspection to meet with parents and carers at the start of morning school; all were positive about the care and support provided, although some expressed reservations on the use of supply staff.

The local authority's statement of action was fit for purpose. The action plan and the support for the school has been well-considered, appropriately focused and robustly managed. This support has been vital, with the work of a partner headteacher, who is a local leader of education, critical to stabilising the school through a period of considerable staff changes. There are useful links between both schools and this needs to be developed further to support newly-qualified staff.

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

Yours sincerely

David Jones
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in September 2010.

- Accelerate pupils' learning and increase their rate of progress by ensuring teachers consistently:
 - use assessment information to identify the next steps in each pupil's learning and to plan lessons that meet their individual needs
 - challenge the thinking of the more-able pupils
 - engage pupils through more skilled questioning
 - provide opportunities for the pupils to work collaboratively by discussing their ideas with others or working together in groups
 - deploy all adults in the classroom to maximise learning at all times.

- Help pupils to understand better how to improve their work by:
 - giving them sufficient time to respond to their teacher's marking
 - sharing with them what they need to do to move their work consistently to the next level
 - providing opportunities for them to assess their work and that of others.

- Provide a curriculum that is planned more closely to meet the pupils' needs by:
 - extending the range of intervention programmes to support the learning of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities
 - providing guidance to teachers on how to maximise the impact of reading sessions
 - ensuring that basic skills are promoted more effectively across subjects and topics.