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30 September 2011

Mrs A Sands
Acting Headteacher
Melton Primary School
Melton Road
Melton
Woodbridge
IP12 1PG

Dear Mrs Sands

Notice to improve: monitoring inspection of Melton Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and the staff gave when I inspected your school on 29 September 2011, for the time Mrs Todd and Mrs Sands gave to our phone discussions and for the information provided before and during the inspection. Please would you also pass on my thanks to the local authority representative and the Chair of the Governing Body for their time in my discussions.

Since the last inspection, one member of staff is on maternity leave and, at the time of this monitoring visit, the headteacher was on sick leave. There is an acting part-time headteacher and acting deputy headteacher. In order for the acting deputy headteacher to fulfil her role, a part-time supply teacher is sharing her teaching commitment. There are currently four mixed-age classes consisting of Reception and Year 1, Year 1 and 2, Year 3 and 4, and Year 4 and 5, and there is one single-age class in Year 6.

As a result of the inspection on 17 January 2011, 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 satisfactory progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

The improvement of behaviour has been given a high priority, following a number of fixed-term exclusions during the summer term. Behaviour across the school is improving and there are sufficient and effective strategies to ensure that there have been no exclusions so far this term. Pupils are developing a clearer understanding that poor behaviour is unacceptable. The positive emphasis on rewards for good work, good manners and kindness shown to others, emphasised through

merits and celebration assemblies, are changing the attitudes of pupils. This, in turn, is having a positive impact on improving pupils' achievement. Although pupils are making satisfactory progress against their starting points, standards have dipped at both the end of the Reception Year and in Key Stage 1 since 2010. Half the children achieved the expected levels for their age at the end of the Reception Year. Standards for half of the children in the Reception Year are lower than age-related levels in communication, language and literacy. By the end of Year 2, around two thirds of pupils reached the national levels in reading and half in writing in 2011. Mathematics was more successful, with three quarters of the cohort reaching national averages. This dip has been halted amongst the older pupils. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 improved in 2011. Targets set in English and mathematics were exceeded and there were increasing numbers of pupils (around a third) reaching the higher levels in English and Mathematics. This has been as a result of more rigor from the leadership team in thoroughly monitoring pupils' achievement and ensuring relevant and supportive intervention strategies. Some of these strategies include nurture groups to raise pupils' self-esteem, and specific groups, for example, aimed at enhancing pupils' speaking and listening skills.

The monitoring and impact of teaching on learning is being given a greater prominence. An intensive teacher support programme has been introduced to help improve teaching. There is a more consistent approach to teaching, with more lessons being judged satisfactory or good. Pupils are clearer, particularly in the older classes, about what they are learning and why, and what they need to do to improve. Marking is good for the older pupils in the school and helps them to improve their work. More work is being given that relates better to pupils' individual needs. There are still some areas in teaching which require improvement, for example, in relation to matching work even more accurately to pupils' abilities and ages. Whole-school self-evaluation is more accurate and the newly written school improvement plan clearly identifies and reflects precisely what needs to be done to consolidate success and secure further improvement.

Statutory requirements are now met in relation to the promotion of community cohesion. An audit has been carried out and there is an action plan to extend the school's links, both nationally and further afield. There are some good links developing with schools in both Germany and Norway.

The local authority continues to provide effective support for the school. The local authority are supporting the school in the instigation of the intensive teaching programme and in providing links to view good practice in other schools. The authority's English adviser has been working with the school to support the raising of standards. This external support, along with the acting headteacher and deputy

headteacher's more rigorous monitoring and evaluation, have helped the school to raise its own internal capacity to improve, which is satisfactory.

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

Susan Vale
Additional Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in January 2011

- Build the school's capacity to improve by developing the skills of those with leadership and management responsibilities in:
 - ensuring self-evaluation provides the school with an accurate appraisal of its effectiveness
 - raising the quality of school development planning so that it reflects precisely what needs to be done to consolidate success and secure further improvement
 - judging effectively the impact of teaching on pupils' learning.

- By December 2011, raise the quality of teaching so that it becomes consistently good. In particular ensure all staff:
 - manage the behaviour of pupils effectively
 - match work to pupils' individual needs
 - enable pupils to understand easily what they are learning and what they need to do to improve.

- Meet statutory requirements with regard to the promotion of community cohesion by:
 - carrying out an audit of the religious, ethnic and socio-economic characteristics of the school community within a local, national and global context
 - developing an action plan to extend the school's links nationally and further afield
 - implementing evaluation procedures to review the impact of this provision.