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3 December 2015

Mrs Zoe Turner  
Headteacher  
Kingmoor Nursery and Infant School  
Hether Drive  
Lowry Hill  
Carlisle  
Cumbria  
CA30ES

Dear Mrs Turner

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Kingmoor Nursery and Infant School**

Following my visit to your school on 20 November 2015, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in June 2015. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement, identified at the recent section 5 inspection, in order to become a good school.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with you and members of your senior leadership team, the vice chair of the governing body and two other governors, as well as a group of pupils from Year 2. I also talked to pupils informally around the school. A meeting was also held with the local authority adviser to discuss the action taken since the last inspection and the level of support provided. Short discussions were also held with several groups of parents as they collected their children from school. The school's development plan, self evaluation and a range of additional documentation, which you provided, was also scrutinised. In addition, learning walks with you focused on the learning environment in classrooms.

## **Context**

Since the inspection, there have been several staff changes. An acting deputy headteacher is in post and several new staff members have been appointed, including two newly qualified teachers. In addition, two teaching assistants have been appointed to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Two apprentices have also joined the staff. The number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities entering the early years is rising. Many of these children have speech, language and communication issues, moderate learning difficulties and developmental delay. There have also been significant changes to the governing body, with several new governors taking up post.

## **Main findings**

Since the inspection, there has been a noticeable improvement in outcomes for pupils. At the end of early years, 74% of children reached a good level of development, an increase of 10% on the previous year. In terms of expected and more than expected progress, the school performed better than the average for the local authority. However, this good performance masks a noticeable gender gap in early years, with the boys performing significantly less well than the girls. It was noticeable that boys lacked concentration compared to the girls, tended not to finish tasks and were easily distracted. Girls, on the other hand, put more effort into their work and took greater pride in completing it well. Pupils' performance of 88% in the phonics screening test is well above the national average. At Key Stage 1, outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics were above the national average, although writing remained the weakest. In terms of pupils exceeding the expected level for their age, pupils performed above the national average in reading and mathematics.

Safeguarding arrangements are now robust. There are incident logs for each class, which are religiously kept up to date. Outcomes are monitored and followed up. Details do, however, reveal many incidents linked to the aggressive behaviour of a small number of pupils, frequently boys. Procedures for more serious safeguarding issues are recorded and followed meticulously, and relevant authorities are notified and involved. There has been a strong focus on updated safeguarding training for all teachers and relevant governors. Checks to ensure that the site is safe and secure are made on a daily basis. It is well maintained and access is well controlled. Checks on teachers and other adults working with pupils are thorough and, in most cases, completed well in advance of the adult actually taking up post. The school has very quickly addressed the issues that were a cause for some concern during the inspection in June.

Governance has changed unrecognisably. There has been a very rapid response from governors to rectify the weaknesses that had been identified in June. The governing body has been reconstituted. New governors with specialist skills have been brought on board. Child protection policies and procedures have been reviewed

and updated and levels of safeguarding have been raised. Governors are very aware of their roles and responsibilities. There is now a new vigour and vitality about the governing body, and there is a clear determination that governors will now be an integral part of the leadership team to take the school forward. Governors are much better briefed and are much better placed to challenge school leaders and managers about issues and improvements being made. They now have a greater visible presence around the school. For example, governor representatives have attended strategic improvement meetings, staff monitoring and moderation sessions after school to look at writing across the curriculum, as well as staff training sessions. Governors intend to have regular surgery sessions during parents' evenings, where at least two governors will be available to talk to parents and hear their views.

During our learning walks around the school, we visited every class and observed the learning taking place. We noted a marked contrast between the sessions where pupils were engaged independently or collaboratively and those where they were expected to sit for long periods listening to the teacher. When pupils were actively engaged they were often motivated, on task and into their learning. In contrast, in those sessions where they were expected to sit still for long periods, it became clear that they were losing interest, were not listening and becoming fidgety and disruptive. In these cases, the questioning from teachers did not engage their attention or interest.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance is good and continues to improve. They did, however, express concern that some lessons were still disrupted by a minority of boys, in particular. Pupils identified that some bullying does occur and there are occasions when over-boisterous behaviour affects pupils' play at break- and lunchtimes. Overall, they feel that they are kept safe and that adults respond very quickly when any incident occurs. Conduct around the school is good. Behaviour in the dining room is sensible and animated, with pupils enjoying socialising with each other. Older pupils take their responsibilities to keep the room tidy and clean very seriously. Movement around the school is well managed. Pupils are inquisitive, polite, open doors and wait for adults to pass.

Parents interviewed were very positive about the school and the efforts being made to educate their children, and to keep them safe. They identified and confirmed that they are kept very well informed through weekly newsletters about what is going on in the school. They receive regular text messages about important events or issues, such as a head lice warnings, as well as incidents affecting their child. There were no dissenting voices.

Ofsted may carry out further monitoring inspections and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

## **External support**

School to school support is focused around the Carlisle school partnership. This support is still developing. The local authority is providing support to develop the governing body, and advice from the link adviser is well received by school leaders. Most of the training support is brokered by the school itself, using a number of experts in their respective fields. This has been instrumental in the improvements that have been put into place.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, and the Director of Children's Services for Cumbria. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Leszek Iwaskow

**Her Majesty's Inspector**