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Mrs Shirley Nicholas-Bond
The Headteacher
Netley Abbey Junior School
Westwood Road
Netley Abbey
Southampton
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Dear Mrs Nicholas-Bond

OFSTED MONITORING OF SCHOOLS WITH NOTICE TO IMPROVE

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 6 December 2006, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. Please pass on my thanks to your staff and governors for taking the time to talk to me during the school day.

As a result of the inspection on 2 May 2006, the school was asked to:

- Raise achievement in English and mathematics so that pupils attain higher standards.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that a high proportion of lessons are of good quality and pupils are fully challenged.
- Improve assessment so that teachers are aware of, and can meet individual learning needs.
- Develop and strengthen the role of senior management, particularly in relation to monitoring achievement and standards.

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.

Standards improved in English and science in 2006 but declined overall for mathematics. When compared to national expectations, standards are below average in English and mathematics and above average in science. This is as it was at the time of the last inspection. The most able pupils in the school are performing below national expectation.

Achievement in class is now broadly satisfactory because teaching has improved in many classes. However, over time achievement is unsatisfactory because of the legacy of underachievement related to unsatisfactory teaching in the past. Pupils enter the school with broadly average levels of attainment and still do not make sufficient progress overall by the time they leave in Year 6. Pupils' attitudes to learning remain good. They are well behaved in class and around the school and listen well to the teachers' instructions.

Teaching is mostly satisfactory with some examples of good teaching taking place in some classes. There is a higher proportion of good and satisfactory teaching than at the time of the last inspection. This is because teachers are making better use of assessment of pupils work to plan the next stages of learning. The school correctly recognises that not all teaching has improved as well as it could have and there are still pockets of unsatisfactory teaching. The school is addressing these weaknesses through additional training and support.

The pace of the learning has improved and in the better lessons pupils are motivated by the activities. They take an interest in what they are doing and engage in good discussions with other pupils and their class teachers. Weaknesses still remain in some lessons and these are similar to last time. Weak lessons are characterised by too few opportunities for active learning and practical activities and problem solving. The pace of the lessons slows when pupils are passively watching the teacher using equipment at the front of the class. In lessons that are inadequate and in some lessons where weaknesses remain, the progress of pupils is slower.

The curriculum for English and mathematics is planned to give a better match to pupils' needs by the wider introduction of setting for these subjects in all year groups. While this is providing better opportunities for pupils to work at a level appropriate to their need, the school needs to evaluate how effective setting is in raising the achievement of different groups of pupils, particularly the higher attaining pupils.

Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory and this is satisfactory progress from the last inspection. The headteacher has clear ideas for school improvement and with the support of a stronger senior leadership team has identified the schools' strengths and weaknesses well. Monitoring of teaching is regular and robust and feedback is given to teachers with clearly identified points for development. The evaluation of teaching is accurate.

Governors continue to support and challenge the school and more governors are becoming involved in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. The school is receiving good support from the local authority through targeted management training and support in monitoring and evaluating the quality of classroom practice.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school.

Yours sincerely

Linda Kelsey
Her Majesty's Inspector