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Mr D Bryant  
Headteacher  
Southbury Primary School  
Swansea Road  
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Dear Mr Bryant

### **Ofsted 2010–11 survey inspection programme: nurture groups**

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit with Maureen York HMI on 20 January 2011 as part of our survey on the use of nurture groups for pupils who are vulnerable to underachieving.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to a national report. Published reports are likely to list the names of the contributors or contributing institutions but individuals and institutions will not be identified in the main text without their consent.

This letter briefly summarises our discussion at the end of the visit.

#### **Strengths of the nurture group provision**

- Senior leaders have a clear vision for the work of the nurture group as part of a whole-school approach to inclusion. Leaders realise that the nurture group alone will not meet all the pupils' needs and, therefore, forms just one element of a comprehensive range of additional provision and intervention that reflects the school's ethos and commitment to supporting the needs of all pupils. This wide range of provision is coordinated successfully to provide flexible and targeted support.
- Communication and partnerships, both within the school and with parents, ensure that approaches are followed consistently. Staff are given helpful information and training in the approaches used in the nurture group which are adopted widely across the school. In this way, the school is able to support a larger number of pupils.
- Parents are very positive about the provision in the nurture group and the impact that it is having, or has had in the past, on their children. They feel well informed about their children's progress and feel welcomed into the nurture group environment. Parents are encouraged to visit the nurture group to work with their children and to follow nurture group practices at home.

- The nurture room is visually attractive with good-quality resources. Despite the busy and exciting atmosphere, the positive role model from staff and the well-established routines of the day provide a calming influence for pupils. The activities in the nurture group are broad and balanced with an appropriate focus on personal, social and emotional development as well as basic skills. Staff are careful to plan activities that are different from, but complement, those that pupils might encounter in their own class.
- Despite attending the nurture group, pupils remain part of the school with regular opportunities to work in their class and develop relationships with their peers. They receive targeted support where appropriate when they work in their class. Reintegration into the mainstream class is planned carefully, using a phased and flexible approach to ensure a smooth transition.
- Staff use a range of systems to identify the right pupils to receive support in the nurture group. The school's own evaluations show that pupils in the nurture group make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. The nurture group has had striking success with some pupils with severe behavioural problems so that they are now able to begin to learn. Those who have now left the nurture group are making better academic progress.

**Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:**

- reviewing the various methods in place for observing and recording pupils' academic progress
- developing a system to bring together the information on each pupil into a coherent format to provide a clearer picture of their whole development and to enable senior leaders to evaluate the overall effectiveness and impact of the provision.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop this aspect of the school's work.

As I explained previously, a copy of this letter will be published on the Ofsted website. It may be used to inform decisions about any future inspection. A copy of this letter is also being sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

**Jane Wotherspoon**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**