

1 April 2011

Ms C Koerner  
Headteacher  
Sharps Copse Primary School  
Prospect Lane  
Havant  
Hampshire  
PO0 5PE

Dear Ms Koerner

### **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 on 1 March 2011 as part of our survey of the use of nurture groups for pupils who are vulnerable to underachieving.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our national evaluation and reporting. Published reports are likely to list the names of the contributing institutions but individual 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**

- Sharps Copse is a nurturing school where all members of staff, including administrators and the site manager, contribute to pupils' social development.
- Positive relationships underpin the work of the school and help to develop pupils' confidence and self-esteem.
- Home-school liaison is particularly strong and parents and carers value highly the parenting courses provided for them by the nurture group staff.
- The nurture group is part of a broad package of support and intervention, including mentoring. Good procedures for identifying individual needs, including effective use of tools such as the Boxall profile and emotional literacy checklists, ensure that pupils receive appropriate provision.
- Nurture group staff model the expected behaviour well.
- Pupils' progress is monitored in detail through meetings with key staff each term. The meetings are informed by a range of assessments including National Curriculum levels and attendance data.
- The school's monitoring of data indicates that the nurture group is effective in improving pupils' attitudes to learning, and their attendance

and behaviour. Progress in reading, writing and mathematics is limited because pupils miss most of the literacy and numeracy lessons while attending the nurture group.

- The school attributes the significant improvement in pupils' behaviour to the work of its nurture group.
- Parents and carers value highly the nurture group provision and attribute its success to the one-to-one attention given to each child.
- The local authority provides effective training and support for nurture group staff, including staff in the community improvement partnership of schools.

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

- accelerating pupils' progress further by:
  - ensuring that pupils do not miss out on developing literacy and numeracy skills, particularly when they are in the nurture group for extended periods of time
  - using the Boxall profile to set targets more systematically for individual pupils in the nurture group and monitoring and evaluating pupils' progress towards their targets and using the information to inform lesson planning.

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 will be sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

**Sue Frater**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**