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Mrs C Bishop  
Headteacher  
Peel Common Junior School  
The Drive  
Gosport  
Hampshire  
PO13 0QD

Dear Mrs Bishop

### **Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Peel Common Junior School**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 7 December 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please pass on my thanks to staff and the pupils.

A small number of contextual changes have occurred since the last inspection. Classes have been reorganised to accommodate a single age group in Year 6 with new mixed-age classes in Years 4 and 5. The majority of learning support assistants (LSA) are new to the school. Their deployment has been revised and they are each linked to one class to provide continuity of support.

As a result of the inspection on 24 and 25 May 2010, 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 has made satisfactory progress in making improvements, and satisfactory progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Attainment declined in the last two years to below the national average, with mathematics being significantly below average in 2011. Senior leaders and staff have taken decisive action since the last inspection to change this position. A large number of initiatives have been introduced that have had a positive impact on improving the quality of teaching and accelerating the rate of pupils' progress. Work seen in lessons, pupils' books and the schools own assessment data indicate the decline has been halted. All pupils make at least satisfactory progress and are working consistently at or above the expected levels. Pupils in some classes and groups of pupils, including the more able and those identified with special

educational needs and/or disabilities, are starting to make rapid progress as a result of raised expectations of pupils' capabilities. Pupils in one Year 6 English lesson made good progress in their understanding and writing of biographies because of clearly set learning objectives, continuous reminders of their learning aims and timely interventions by the teacher and LSA on how to improve work further. Examples of work in books, from across the curriculum, show increased opportunities for pupils to use and apply their knowledge in practical mathematics tasks, particularly in science.

The introduction of cursive writing and focus on improving pupils' presentation skills is having a positive impact on their handwriting across the curriculum and setting out their work in mathematics and science. Handwriting sessions model high expectations; pupils concentrate well and want to improve. Pupils were particularly enthusiastic about attaining the scribe awards for using their cursive writing and literacy skills in subjects other than English. However, this is yet to be firmly embedded with all pupils transferring and applying their new skills consistently.

The use of assessment, tracking and monitoring of pupils' progress over time has been strengthened, including an increased number of progress meetings between staff and senior leaders. This has led to higher expectations and aspiration for pupils' achievement. Analysis of information on pupils' learning is leading to earlier identification and intervention with pupils of all abilities to ensure they remain on track to achieve their ambitious targets. Equally, teachers make good use of the information to carefully plan work that matches the needs and capabilities of all pupils in their classes; this was a strength in all the teaching observed. Teachers are becoming increasingly effective at using strategies to observe, assess and intervene with individuals, groups or the whole class. This is helping pupils to improve their work and ensuring they make the expected or accelerated progress.

The quality of teaching is improving, with an increasing proportion being consistently good. Teachers make better use of time and pupils settle quickly into their work at the start of lessons. Occasionally, however, there is still too much time spent on introducing lessons. In the lessons observed, teachers set clear learning objectives through the new 'I am learning to' statements. The introduction of 'steps to success' and HOW (help, ok, whiz) is helping pupils understand how well they are doing against the objectives or their next steps in learning, or how to seek help. However, this is yet to be embedded firmly across the school. Pupils know their targets for improvement in English, although they are less secure about their targets in mathematics. In one stronger lesson, in Year 4 and 5 on 3D shapes, pupils understood the relevancy of the topic and how to improve and were eager to get to the 'extra mile' target. Marking has improved. Most includes useful comments on strengths and how to improve further. However, not all marking helps pupils understand clearly the links between lesson objectives and their individual targets.

The school's contribution to community cohesion has improved through changes to the religious education and topic-based curriculum, resulting in pupils' increased

knowledge, understanding and appreciation of other religions and cultures. Pupils were particularly enthusiastic about the 'Passage through India' where they were able to explore ideas through a range of interesting activities. The increased number of visits and visitors to the school has supported these improvements well.

Senior leaders have introduced rigour into the use of assessment data to hold staff more closely to account for the progress pupils make in their class. They recognise the need to extend analysis for the different groups of pupils at the school further. The roles and responsibilities of other leaders in the school have increased effectively. Monitoring of the school's work is good, leading to the improvements in the quality of teaching and pupil achievement indicating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

The local authority provides effective support. This includes providing professional development for teachers by working with an external advanced skills teacher, moderation of lessons, and monitoring activities.

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

Judith Rundle  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in May 2010**

- Accelerate pupils' progress and strengthen attainment by ensuring that:
  - Pupils' presentation skills are improved and that cursive writing is taught throughout the school
  - expectations of what pupils can achieve are lifted and that work in all lessons is matched to the different capabilities of the pupils
  - pupils are consistently given opportunities to use and apply their knowledge in practical mathematics tasks.
- Strengthen the quality of, and reduce inconsistencies in, teaching by:
  - ensuring that pupils have a clear understanding of what they have to do to meet lesson objectives
  - focusing the marking of pupils' work on intended outcomes of the work set and identifying clear targets for future improvement
  - ensuring that teachers reduce the amount of time spent on introducing lessons.
- Improve the school's contribution to community cohesion by providing more opportunities for pupils to appreciate the cultural and religious diversity present in the United Kingdom and beyond.