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11 May 2012

Mrs J Bradshaw  
Executive Headteacher  
Denmead Junior School  
Bere Road  
Denmead  
Waterlooville  
Hampshire  
PO7 6PH

Dear Mrs Bradshaw

### **Notice to improve: monitoring inspection of Denmead Junior School**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 10 May 2012 and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. I would be grateful if you would pass on my thanks to the pupils and staff for their friendly reception and to the time the Chair of the Governing Body and local authority representatives gave.

Since the previous inspection, there have been a few contextual changes. These have included the election of a new Chair of the Governing Body, and two of the Year 3 classes being taught by temporary appointments for the rest of the academic year because of ongoing staff illness.

As a result of the inspection on 4 and 5 October 2011, 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 is making satisfactory progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising pupils' achievement.

In previous years, pupils have started Year 3 with standards of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics significantly above average and have left Year 6 broadly in line with national expectations. Since the inspection, the school has focused much of its work on increasing the rates of progress. Consequently, in the work seen, from lessons, pupils' books and the school's analysis of assessment information, there are indications that progress is beginning to increase, especially in

Year 6, and particularly in mathematics for the more-able pupils. Across the school, the proportion of pupils who are making better than expected progress is beginning to increase. However, this is not a consistent picture. There are variations within each year group, especially Year 3 where there have been significant changes in staffing during the year. The school has identified groups of pupils who require additional support to make up lost ground but these actions are still too recent to gauge their full impact. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are making the same rates of progress as their peers.

The quality of teaching overall is beginning to improve with a higher proportion of lessons that are well taught. However, the quality varies within each year group. In the better lessons, pupils are clear about their learning objectives and know what they need to do to improve. This is because teachers are using assessment information more accurately to plan specific outcomes that meet pupils' needs. Pupils told the inspector that they felt lessons are more challenging and know what their targets are. Effective examples of pupils working independently and collaborating in groups and pairs were observed. For example, in one Year 6 mathematics class, pupils were attempting to solve a 'murder mystery' while learning about fractions and percentages. The best examples of marking of pupils' work demonstrate that more teachers are providing pupils with information about their progress and what the next steps should be. Across the school there is increasing consistency in how teachers ensure pupils are motivated and interested in their learning, with the result that instances of low-level disruptive behaviour are very rare. In the less well-taught lessons, teachers' introductions and explanations to the class are too long and although lesson plans usually have clear overall objectives, they do not identify learning outcomes for different pupils' needs and abilities precisely enough. Consequently, pupils' progress slows down, hindering them from achieving levels of which they are capable.

Since the last inspection, the executive headteacher and head of school have effectively ensured that there are appropriate systems and procedures in place to track individual pupils' progress. As a result, accurate information about pupils' achievement is available for teachers to use in their planning. This information is beginning to be used effectively by the senior leaders and increasingly by middle managers to discuss the progress and attainment of pupils. As a result, appropriately challenging targets for year groups and individual pupils are set more often. This was clearly seen in many classes. Pupils were able to tell the inspector what their next steps were. Plans for improving the school are securely built on accurate information about the school's strengths and weaknesses, leading to an increase in the speed at which the school is improving. Middle leaders are clear about their roles and responsibilities and are beginning to take a more active role in the monitoring and evaluation of pupils' progress and the quality of teaching. The governing body is beginning to hold the school to account effectively. The Chair of the Governing Body has an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and is ambitious for its future.

The statement of action produced by the local authority fulfils the requirements and the school has been provided with effective support and challenge. A range of advisers, consultants and inspectors has been deployed since the inspection to work with the school with the result that senior and middle leaders are beginning to have an impact on the school's improvement. This has led to well-advanced plans for the phased reduction in the local authority's support.

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

John Seal

**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## Annex

### The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in October 2011

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels by:
  - quickly putting in robust systems to ensure that accurate information about pupils' progress can be generated, shared and readily understood by all users
  - ensuring that target-setting is realistic, challenging, widely used and drives improvement across the school
  - improving the quality and accuracy of self-evaluation and improvement planning
  - ensuring that all leaders are aware of what is expected of them in their roles and that lines of accountability are clear
  - ensuring that monitoring and evaluation are undertaken more rigorously by all leaders and the governing body.
  
- Raise levels of achievement of all pupils, especially in mathematics and for the more able by:
  - ensuring that accurate assessment information is used effectively to match teaching to pupils' needs, abilities and interests
  - providing a greater level of challenge in lessons and more opportunities to develop higher-level thinking skills and independence
  - securing greater pupils engagement to reduce instances of behaviour that does not support good learning
  - ensuring that marking consistently informs pupils of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.