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11 February 2013

Mr I Rix  
Headteacher  
Ashley Junior School  
Ashley Road  
New Milton  
BH25 5BP

Dear Mr Rix

### **Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 to Ashley Junior School**

Following my visit to your school on 8 February 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on the findings of my visit. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in December 2012. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

#### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher and other senior leaders, teachers, representatives of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority. The school action plan was evaluated and the inspector looked at other documents used to monitor and evaluate the school's work.

#### **Context**

No significant contextual changes have occurred since the inspection.

#### **Main findings**

The headteacher and other senior leaders have produced an action plan that addresses all the areas for improvement identified during the last inspection. It does not have specific enough information on who is leading activities, when they start or quantifiable milestones that can be used to monitor its impact. Not all actions or

monitoring activities have a clear enough focus on judging the impact on pupils' standards and progress.

Senior leaders and subject leaders for English and mathematics introduced a broad range of initiatives before the inspection, which are now starting to be used more consistently by teachers. Senior leaders and governors recognise that the new system for recording and tracking pupils' progress, initiated by the local authority adviser and introduced in September, is leading to clearer and easier evaluations of pupils' achievement. It is helping to identify any pupils who are underachieving and is resulting in earlier interventions and/or greater challenge for the more able. The rate of pupils' progress appears to be improving but the pace of these improvements needs to accelerate further.

A programme of training has started, including more opportunities to observe and share effective practice through peer observations. Subject leaders for English and mathematics have benefited from working with the local authority subject consultants. As a result, the school's calculation policy has been revised, there is a clearer view of the writing standards pupils are expected to achieve in each age group and pupils are more aware of their targets for improvement.

The governing body has also benefited from working with the local authority learning partner, especially in the use of assessment data and linking this with staff performance and pay awards. Governors are now being provided with better and fuller data on pupils' achievement so they are able to ask challenging and probing questions about the school's work and how this compares to the national picture. They are starting to hold the headteacher and other leaders more rigorously to account for pupil progress.

Senior leaders and governors have begun to take effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement, identified at the recent section 5 inspection. Following the visit to the school, HMI recommend that further action is taken to:

- ensure changes and improvements happen with more urgency
- indicate clearly who is responsible and accountable for leading actions
- ensure milestones are quantifiable and measurable and embedded into the action plan so they can be used to hold teachers more robustly to account for pupils' progress in their class
- produce, and share with staff, a timeline that indicates clearly when actions and/or training will start and when it will be monitored to ensure implementation and impact
- ensure that monitoring activities focus more on pupils' learning and that feedback to teachers is explicit in what they need to do to improve further
- inform HMI of pupil progress
- plan future development and monitoring activities between HMI and senior leaders to:

- develop senior leaders' focus on learning and to ensure that feedback given to teachers has specific next steps for improvement
- monitor pupil progress and standards
- monitor the impact of assessment, marking and feedback and pupils' responses to marking.

Ofsted will continue to monitor the school regularly until its next section 5 inspection.

### **External support**

The local authority has increased the level of support and challenge for the school, including supporting the headteacher and his senior leadership team to monitor and evaluate the school's work in a more robust way. They have provided effective consultant support for subject leaders. Training for the governing body has increased their knowledge and understanding of the school's work when compared to the national picture and helped them to ask robust questions of leaders. Senior leaders, staff and governors have accessed a range of local authority courses to improve the quality of their work.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services Hampshire.

Yours sincerely

**Judith Rundle**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**