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15 May 2013

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

Dear Mrs Bradshaw

**Monitoring inspection visit to Denmead Junior School for schools judged to require improvement under section 8 of the Education Act 2005**

Following my visit to your school on 14 May 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.

The visit was the second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement, following the section 5 inspection in October 2012.

**Evidence**

During the visit, I held meetings with you and the head of school, three governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body, and a representative of the local authority. A range of documentation was scrutinised, including the school development plan, assessment and pupil progress data and monitoring evidence. I also looked at a sample of pupils' work from each class.

**Context**

There have been no significant changes since my last visit, although four teachers are leaving the school at the end of this term. You are in the process of appointing replacements. You have recently appointed an assessment leader, who will also take up his post in September.

## **Main findings**

There is clear evidence that, since the recent section 5 inspection and my subsequent first monitoring inspection, you are continuing to take effective action to address the points for improvement identified in the section 5 inspection report. Although you rightly recognise that there is still more to do to ensure that these improvements are fully embedded, the school is on the right track. You have taken action to improve the quality of teaching and the range and balance of what is being taught. I can see that this is better meeting the needs of individual pupils and having a positive impact on their progress.

Evidence from my scrutiny of pupils' work, assessment data and internal and external monitoring records indicate that the quality of teaching is steadily improving across the school. You rightly recognise that in some classes teaching remains fragile and the challenge is to ensure that recent improvements are secure and sustainable. Overall, however, improvements in teaching are having a positive impact on accelerating pupils' progress in most classes. The current Year 6 are now on track to attain nationally expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics, although fewer are expected to exceed these. Gains in pupils' achievement in Year 4 are not as rapid as in other year groups.

In the few classes where there are weaknesses in how accurate assessment information is being used to plan work which meets pupils' needs, you are providing suitable training and support to address the issue. The appointment of the assessment leader has the potential to further strengthen this aspect of the school's work. Marking has improved and now provides clearer guidance to pupils on how to improve, although a few teachers do not write neatly in pupils' books, thus failing to set a good example.

Improvements in teaching and the quality of pupils' learning have been supported by the good start that you have made to develop a broader and more exciting curriculum. You have planned themes which appropriately balance the development of key skills with imaginative and exciting topics which pupils help to plan. You rightly recognise the need to review these plans towards the end of this year to ensure that a greater emphasis is placed on pupils using and applying the skills that they are learning. For example, although you have introduced a well-designed calculation policy in mathematics, more needs to be done to ensure that pupils are routinely using their numeracy skills to solve problems in everyday situations.

You have reviewed the school improvement plan and it is now much more useful. It identifies detailed actions, their cost and the timeframes by which they need to be achieved. Clear milestones have measurable criteria against which success can be measured. Governors have introduced rigorous systems for monitoring the progress of the improvement plan and continue to be effective in the way that they challenge the leadership of the school and hold it to account.

Following my visit, I recommend that you take further action to:

- ensure that any remaining weaknesses in accurately assessing pupils' progress and using this to set work which matches pupils' needs is eradicated
- embed the newly developed curriculum by ensuring that it provides regular opportunities for pupils to use and apply their skills in everyday situations, especially in mathematical problem solving.

### **External support**

The local authority has continued to provide good quality support which, as a result of rigorous monitoring, matches the school's needs and is helping you to address weaknesses. The impact of this support is evident; for example, support given since January to improve Year 6 pupils' achievement in writing and mathematics has contributed significantly to the rapid improvement in their attainment in English and mathematics.

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

Yours sincerely

Chris Nye

**Her Majesty's Inspector**