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28 November 2013

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

Dear Mr Rix

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Ashley Junior School**

Following my visit to your school on 26 November 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report 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 second 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.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- strengthen the consistency of marking and feedback in mathematics including giving pupils time to respond and improve their work
- provide more support and coaching for middle leaders so they are able to impact even more on improving the school's work
- undertake a review of governance, because of the large number of new governors, to ensure they all know their roles and responsibilities and expectations of the September 2013 inspection framework.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you and other senior leaders, representatives of the Governing Body and representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. Year 5 and 6 classes were

observed jointly with the inspector and leaders from the school. External data, the schools own assessment information and other self-evaluation documents were evaluated.

## **Main findings**

The school is able to demonstrate improvements, particularly in higher standards, increasing rates of progress and the overall quality of teaching. Teachers have responded positively to training activities and opportunities to share effective practice. As a result, there is a more positive culture of learning apparent in classrooms and around the school and pupils are more interested and engaged in their learning. Aspirations have improved, of both pupils and staff. Better teaching was observed in most classes and pupils are making better progress in lessons and over time.

The quality of teaching is improving although there remains a small proportion that still requires improvement. Teachers are using a broader range of more interesting, creative and exciting approaches to learning which are using and building upon pupils' interests. As result, pupils are more involved and motivated to learn. For example, in the Year 6 classes pupils showed real enthusiasm in exploring characterisation through drama and discussion activities. Pupils know their targets and how to improve their work to attain higher standards. They are showing greater motivation in wanting to learn, show pride in their work and demonstrate greater perseverance in completing high quality work. The quality of marking and feedback has improved with consistent use of the schools policy for 'tickled pink and grow for green'. In the best examples, in both English and mathematics, comments were diagnostic, gave specific comments on how to improve and modelled effectively what better responses looked like. Pupils are increasingly being given time to respond to marking and improve their work. However, this is not consistently followed up by teachers to ensure it is having a long-term impact on improving learning.

The headteacher and other senior leaders have shown real determination and drive to improve the school's work. They have a well-coordinated approach and have made good use of their individual skills and expertise to bring about improvements. They are more robust in monitoring the schools work and holding teachers to account for pupils' performance in their classes. Middle leaders are increasingly leading improvements and having a positive impact in their areas responsibility. Staff have responded well to training activities and most are implementing new initiatives consistently. A large number of new governors have been appointed recently so it would benefit the school to review the roles and responsibilities of the governing body. Procedures for governors to monitor the schools work are in place.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

## **External support**

The local authority continues to provide effective support to senior leaders and teachers. Consultants for English and mathematics have worked with the school since the last inspection resulting in further improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. The local authority will continue to provide specific and selective support for mathematics.

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

Yours sincerely

Judith Rundle

**Additional Inspector**