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Sherie Hart  
Peartree Primary School  
Peartree Lane  
Welwyn Garden City  
AL7 3XW

Dear Mrs Hart

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Peartree Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 31 January 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the findings. 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 October 2013. 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:

- ensure the school's action plans address all of the areas of improvement from the section 5 inspection and show clearly how they are going to be addressed
- ensure school leaders use a range of accurate evidence to gain a clear view of the quality of teaching overtime.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, I met with you and we toured the classrooms together. I met with members of the governing body, the special educational needs co-ordinator and a representative from the local authority. I looked at documents including the school's improvement plans, achievement data and records of your monitoring activities.

## **Main findings**

Since the section 5 inspection, the school has introduced a new marking and feedback policy. Teachers' marking has improved but there remains some inconsistency in the quality of the feedback pupils receive, across year groups. The teaching of phonics (the sounds letters make) has been re-organised into smaller ability groups. Staff have been trained and the teaching of phonics has improved. The school plans to develop this aspect of the curriculum further, in the near future, following staff training.

The headteacher has made useful links with a teaching school so that teachers can observe good or better teaching there. Further joint working is planned and the headteacher plans to set a specific focus for teachers' visits to the teaching school in order to gain the greatest benefit from them.

The headteacher monitors lessons and conducts drop-in visits to classrooms, books are scrutinised and planning is reviewed. Pupils' achievement is also tracked. School leaders are not yet combining all of this evidence to give a clear view of teaching overtime. Vulnerable groups are monitored to compare their progress with other pupils but this information is not always used well enough to identify where pupils are falling behind.

Governors visit the school regularly to monitor progress and are able to ask challenging questions of the headteacher. Some of their questions are not focused enough on checking how well the school is addressing any weaknesses.

The school's Ofsted action plan does not cover all of the areas for improvement from the section 5 inspection and it does not make clear how targets and priorities are to be achieved.

Classrooms are mainly stimulating environments for learning. In lessons, most pupils are engaged and interested in their work. Some daily reading activities are not purposeful and do not contribute well enough to learning. In some lessons activities are not adapted well enough to the particular needs of pupils.

## **External support**

Prior to the section 5 inspection, the local authority did not identify this a school that requires improvement. A local authority representative now visits the school to monitor the school's progress. The local authority has offered the services of a local leader in education to support the headteacher and other school leaders.

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

Yours sincerely

Michelle Winter  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**