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Mrs Ruth Kenny  
Headteacher  
Hart Plain Infant School  
Hart Plain Avenue  
Cowplain  
Waterlooville  
Hampshire, PO8 8RZ

Dear Mrs Kenny

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Hart Plain Infant School**

Following my visit to your school on 6 March 2015, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection 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 December 2014. 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 schools improvement planning:

- describes precisely for each action, the improvement that is expected to result
- refers to improvement in pupils' achievement as the key measure of success, including for the checks governors make
- sets out ambitious timescales, including for complex aspects.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, I met with you and the deputy headteacher and with other leaders. I toured the school with you, visiting all the classrooms and looking briefly at work pupils were doing. I met with the Chair of the Governing Body and three

other governors, and with a representative of the local authority. I examined a range of documents including the school's improvement plans, information about pupils' progress, records of the school's checks on teaching, governing body minutes and local authority reports.

## **Context**

There have been no staff changes since the inspection.

## **Main findings**

You responded promptly to the inspection, showing determination to see immediate improvement in areas identified in the report. You challenged teachers to raise their expectations for pupils' behaviour and the amount and quality of the work pupils produce. You also set out clear requirements for teachers' marking and feedback to pupils, introducing new opportunities for pupils to respond. To support better progress in literacy and mathematics, you re-organised teaching groups.

As a result, the behaviour issues identified in the report have already reduced, pupils are producing more work of a better quality, and teachers have started providing increasingly thoughtful feedback. Furthermore, in some pupils' books I could see them increasingly responding to their teacher's marking by writing a reply or correcting mistakes.

I saw children in Year 1 working hard in their weekly "big write" activity – writing freely and at length, supported flexibly by the adults in the classroom. I saw Year 2 pupils fully engaged in purposeful reading activities, working successfully in small groups with or without adult support. The atmosphere throughout was calm and well-ordered. Pupils including boys showed a ready interest in their work, with one so keen to join his group that he jumped into his chair.

Sensibly, you are being receptive to advice and have already exchanged visits to one another's schools with the headteacher from an outstanding school. Evidently, your positive approach has inspired other leaders to accept the challenge of improving the school to be a good school as soon as possible. The staff team are clearly pulling together to achieve this.

You undertake regular checks on teaching, wisely supporting the evaluations you make through observation with checks on pupils' progress and the work in their books. However, this scrutiny does not focus well enough on the areas identified in the report and the records made are too brief to be helpful.

You have devised a suitable improvement plan, which lists relevant actions. Helpfully, the sections of the plan match exactly the areas identified in the report. However, the plan does not describe well enough the precise improvement you expect to see resulting from planned actions, especially in terms of pupils'

achievement. Moreover, the time allowed for some fundamental improvements is too long, and “milestone” indicators of success are not sufficiently measurable. Additionally, the plan omits any reference to ensuring early years provision improves to be outstanding.

The Chair of the Governing Body has a clear view of the need for well-paced, well-organised and sustained improvement. Individual governors have been allocated specific areas of improvement to check; governors’ visits are increasing in their frequency and purpose. Governors are firmly focused on looking at improvement in pupils’ achievement as the main indicator of success. I am pleased to see that governors are devising a detailed monitoring schedule, linked to the school’s improvement plan.

### **External support**

The improvement of Hart Plain is a high priority for the local authority and senior advisers are monitoring the school’s improvement closely. The local authority provided relevant support promptly, and is committed to sustain this. The local authority brokered the valuable partnership with an outstanding school. English and mathematics consultants have already provided helpful training for leaders and staff. Suitable expertise in provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is being provided. However, it is disappointing that important weaknesses in the school’s improvement plan were not identified when the draft document was shared.

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

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

Yours sincerely

Siân Thornton  
**Her Majesty’s Inspector**