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Yvonne Jones  
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Dear Mrs Jones

### **Serious weaknesses monitoring inspection of Hyde Park Infants' School**

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection of your school that took place on 5 October 2022, on behalf of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills. The monitoring inspection was carried out under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005 and was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses following the graded (section 5) inspection that took place in November 2021.

During the inspection, I discussed with you, representatives from the governing body, the CEO and the chair of the trust the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent graded inspection. We discussed the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. I also looked at curriculum documentation, spoke to teachers, listened to some pupils read, visited lessons and looked at pupils' work. I checked the procedures for keeping pupils safe and scrutinised documents, including the school's plans for improvement, leaders' self-evaluation and minutes of meetings. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

**Hyde Park Infants' School remains inadequate and has serious weaknesses. Leaders have made progress to improve the school, but more work is necessary for the category of concern to be removed.**

## **The progress made towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation**

Since the previous inspection, there have been a number of significant changes to staffing. The executive headteacher joined the school in January 2022. The previous acting headteacher is now the head of school. A high number of staff in leadership roles, at all levels, are relatively new to their post.

You have taken swift action to improve the school. With the support of the trust, you have decisive plans in place for what needs to happen next. Senior leaders set out clear and realistic expectations that are understood by all stakeholders. You have rightly prioritised the development of the curriculum, including the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Leaders have redesigned the curriculum. The school's curriculum now identifies the key knowledge that pupils need to know and remember. The sequence of the new curriculum supports pupils to build knowledge more effectively. Subject leadership capacity is strengthened. Subject leaders are starting to benefit from a well-thought-out programme of professional development. However, many subject leaders are new to their roles. It is too early to see the impact of their work on the implementation of the new curriculum.

Leaders have implemented checks on the quality of education. They are improving guidance provided to staff to develop teaching and learning effectively. However, subject leaders do not yet check with precision that the curriculum helps pupils to know more and remember more.

Leaders have ensured that there is a more consistent approach to the teaching of early reading. The reading leader has an accurate view of the effectiveness of the phonics programme. Pupils read books that match their reading ability. Leaders provide training for staff that helps them to understand the school's approach to phonics. This includes coaching for staff to ensure that all phonics teaching is high quality. Staff identify pupils' needs quickly and provide the appropriate support that helps them to progress well in their reading.

Pupils with SEND have started to receive the help they need to learn more successfully. Pupils' learning targets now reflect their needs more accurately. Leaders regularly review pupils' progress. They monitor the support that pupils receive and act on their findings. Leaders know that the identification process for pupils with SEND needs to be strengthened. There are already plans in place for this to happen.

Children in the Reception Year learn in an environment that meets their developmental needs increasingly well. More children show sustained engagement in well-considered learning activities. Children begin to learn phonics as soon as they join the school. Opportunities to support pupils' physical development are increasing. Leaders currently make the most of the outdoor space available. However, a new, purpose-built Reception

provision, with outdoor space, is due for completion imminently. Leaders intend that this will enable staff to support and enhance learning using the environment.

Staff respect leaders for considering their workload throughout a period of change. Leaders' expectations are high, but not at the expense of staff's well-being. Communication with staff and parents has strengthened. They understand the positive actions leaders are taking to improve the school. Staff engage positively in their own professional development. Leaders know that there is much more to do to ensure that the quality of education continues to improve.

Governors provide effective support and challenge to you. They participate in regular monitoring meetings to ensure that leaders' improvement plans are having the necessary impact on the quality of education.

The trust supports you well to build capacity to further improve the school. Checks on the progress and pace of developments are regular and thorough. The trust holds an accurate understanding of the school's current strengths and areas for improvement. It checks that actions allocated in the improvement plan are suitable and gives staff the necessary time to embed new ideas. Across the trust, leaders make the most of hub groups linked to curriculum areas.

Leaders benefit from the trust's use of external support to enhance aspects of the school's development plan where relevant, such as ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the phonics programme.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, and the chief executive officer of the Horizon multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Plymouth. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Jane Dennis  
**His Majesty's Inspector**