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Miss D Charman
Executive Headteacher
Hatch Warren Junior School
Gershwin Road
Basingstoke
RG22 4PQ

Dear Miss Charman

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Hatch Warren Junior School

Following my visit to your school on 28 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 first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in September 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:

- make sure that the higher expectations of pupils' achievement that you have introduced result in appropriately challenging work for all pupils
- continue to train learning support assistants in their role, so that they make valuable contributions to all pupils' learning
- give all middle leaders full responsibility for the achievement of pupils as soon as possible.

Evidence

During the visit I met with you and your deputy, the Chair of the Governing Body and another governor, and a representative of the local authority to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I briefly visited every classroom with you, and I evaluated the school improvement plan.

Main findings

You are leading this school with passion and great determination, and you continue to demonstrate an accurate understanding of what changes need to be made to secure good levels of achievement. You are inspiring staff and pupils with your vision for the school. You and your deputy are successfully addressing some long-standing and serious shortcomings in the school's work, and raising everyone's expectations of what the pupils can achieve. The arrangement whereby you are headteacher of two schools, here and Oakridge Junior School, has already been a success and has been welcomed by parents. It is reassuring for everyone that this arrangement has been formalised until summer 2015. Governors, and the local authority, have very high levels of confidence in your capacity to improve this school.

You have begun to make significant changes to the nature of the teaching and this is starting to improve achievement. Pupils are beginning to show deeper interest in, and enjoyment of, their work. This is especially evident in Years 3 and 4 so far. The systems in place to track pupils' progress are thorough, and enable you and your middle leaders to monitor achievement closely, and all teachers to take into account pupils' existing skills and knowledge when planning lessons. Progress is accelerating because of the close monitoring of the achievement of groups in the school, and the continual assessment built into many lessons which allows pupils to steer their own progress, and the teacher to set the next challenge confidently. The learning needs of the more able pupils are being met much better; they are now doing more challenging work sooner into a topic, and enjoying the extra stimulation. In the past, the progress made by pupils eligible for the pupil premium has been similar to that of their peers; you show a keen awareness that, in order for the existing attainment gap to close, their progress must be accelerated.

Good quality training is being provided for learning support assistants to help them to understand that they have a very important role in securing high quality learning for all, and how to do this. This includes you and your deputy modelling best practice when you visit classrooms. This work is at an early stage but is beginning to make a difference.

You communicate clearly and successfully that team leaders and subject leaders are accountable for pupils' achievements. These middle leaders are beginning to respond well to what is a new way of working for them, and some are relishing their new

responsibilities and starting to have considerable impact in classrooms across the school.

Governors demonstrate an excellent knowledge and understanding of the changes you are putting in place, and their anticipated impact on achievement. They use a very wide range of strategies to keep themselves informed about how successfully these changes are taking place, and how impact will be gauged over the course of the year. This involves half termly monitoring visits, and continual detailed scrutiny of progress data. You and governors are keeping parents well-informed about the changes taking place through a series of meetings.

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 has a very good understanding of the school's strengths and development needs, and has provided close and valuable support for the school since your arrival in April 2013, and since the previous inspection. Useful training has been provided, mathematics and English specialists have worked with your middle leaders to address necessary changes in the quality of teaching, and good support has been given for you and your deputy to manage changes to the curriculum.

You have used expertise from Oakridge Junior School to support developments here, including providing training for teaching assistants, very effectively. A useful visit to another local school has also taken place to allow teachers to observe specific teaching skills, and to learn about coaching as a means of supporting professional development.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body and the Director of Children's Services for Hampshire.

Yours sincerely

Alan Taylor-Bennett
Her Majesty's Inspector