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Mr A Halstead
The Headteacher
Wiveliscombe Primary School
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Dear Mr Halstead

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Wiveliscombe Primary School.

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 2 March 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please pass on my thanks to your staff, pupils and members of the governing body.

Since the previous inspection there have been several changes within the school. A new leadership structure has been established comprising of two new assistant headteacher posts, a new English coordinator post and several other new positions of responsibility created. The governing body has been strengthened and its skills developed. New procedures for monitoring the performance of pupils have been introduced at all levels including governors meeting with the School Improvement Partner, a new school tracking system and new arrangements for intervention strategies to ensure all pupils remain at expected levels of progress. Two teachers have left the school on maternity leave. Several teaching and non-teaching staff have been re-deployed to match the needs of the pupils. Building work to develop the use of the outdoor area for those in Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and to develop the use of the outdoor environment for all pupils has recently been completed.

As a result of the inspection on 3 and 4 December 2009, the school was asked to address the most important areas for improvement which are set out in the annex to this letter.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school has made good progress in making improvements and good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Key Stage 2 results in 2010 improved on previous levels. Pupils' attainment was above average in English and mathematics. Teacher assessments and current work indicate that attainment across Key Stage 2 is now above average for most pupils. Standards in mathematics are slightly below those in English. The attainment of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities in English and mathematics is similar to that of their peers. The number of pupils now achieving higher standards in English have significantly improved. Key Stage 1 results for 2010 also improved, particularly in writing, and are now in line with the national average. Pupils' progress is now good. Between Years 2 and 6 most pupils make good progress in English and mathematics. A very small minority make satisfactory progress.

The newly formed school leadership team has worked with a clear purpose to tackle the key priorities for improvement. This approach has effectively developed a collective responsibility across the whole school for pupil outcomes. There are now detailed and precise plans to remedy areas such as the use of more complex vocabulary and improving presentation in pupils' writing. Planned actions have followed up procedures by leaders at all levels and are clearly matched to the school self-evaluation cycle. Priorities have focused on improving the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Lesson observations and school monitoring show that better teaching and more incisive use of assessment information are resulting in higher attainment and better progress for pupils.

Good use is being made of the new tracking systems put in place to bring about improvements in academic outcomes. Regular pupil progress meetings between teachers and senior leaders and managers develop teachers' evaluative skills well. These meetings have raised expectations of pupils' capacity to achieve in lessons and make better use of assessment information now available. The developing use of day-to-day assessment strategies in lessons are more closely matching activities to pupils' ability levels and accelerating rates of progress. Targeted intervention and catch-up activities are now enabling younger pupils to independently apply their good knowledge of compound words to spell accurately when writing sentences. Older pupils can manipulate words well when constructing shape poems and effectively use persuasive language to produce tourist pamphlets for Tibet.

Good cross-curricular links promote writing well in a range of contexts such as the writing of Silk Road stories in Year 4. New reading schemes in Years 1 to 6 are successfully accelerating rates of progress in reading. The popular 'Bookworms' after-school club and use of a local children's author for gifted and talented children enhance the curriculum well.

Skilled teaching assistants make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. They are well qualified and a valued part of the school. Improved levels of care, guidance and support received by individual pupils, identified as at risk of falling behind, are

effective in developing personal confidence and are helping them achieve better in their literacy skills. Improved transition arrangements for those moving from Reception to Year 1 ensures that pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable are now identified much earlier and appropriate follow-up actions are taken. Pupils are now better informed and knowledgeable about how to reach their targets because of improvements to marking and a more consistent approach to the use of targets throughout the school.

Members of the governing body and subject leaders now play a far greater role in monitoring the work of the school. Through a detailed consultation a new staffing structure has been established. This strong strategic decision has acted in the best interests of pupils. The governing body now has explicit roles in monitoring subjects, participating in lesson observations in a systematic and planned way. Good training has meant that governors are now much better equipped to challenge the progress pupils make in English, for example. Subject leaders now report regularly to committees. This system is contributing well in ensuring a more consistent approach to school procedures and judgements and self-evaluation.

Pupils agree that individual attention, more time to correct misconceptions and the presentation of their work have all improved as a result of the developments made at the school. Pupils appreciate these improvements and recognise the positive impact they have had, most notably on the good behaviour and independent learning skills seen in lessons and around the school. New approaches to curriculum planning, such as the use of Broomhill Sculpture Park, a wider variety of writing opportunities, learning spelling through games and the chance to practise comprehension skills, stimulate pupils' interest in writing further and are meeting their needs well.

I hope that you have found the inspection helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Richard Light
Additional Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in December 2009

- Build on the good start that children make in the Early Years Foundation Stage in order to accelerate their progress throughout Key Stage 1 by:
 - ensuring that teaching meets pupils' needs, in particular by raising expectations of their capacity to achieve
 - implementing more rigorous tracking and analysis of assessment data to check whether progress is being consistently maintained.
- Improving standards in writing for all groups, but particularly high-attaining pupils, by:
 - improving pupils' skills in spelling and punctuation so that work is well presented
 - extending opportunities for pupils to write for a variety of purposes
 - enabling pupils to make decisions for themselves about appropriate ways to present their work in a variety of formats.