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Mrs B Capper
The Headteacher
Westcliff School
First Avenue
Dawlish
Devon
EX7 9RA

Dear Mrs Capper

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Westcliff School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 29 June 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection.

As a result of the inspection on 3 and 4 February 2010, 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 satisfactory progress in making improvements and satisfactory progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

In the national tests in 2010 the attainment of Year 2 pupils rose, and was in line with national averages for reading and just below national averages for writing and mathematics. In Year 6, attainment was close to the national average in English but well below in mathematics. There was significant underachievement in mathematics particularly for higher achieving pupils. The school has worked hard to improve pupils' attainment and the school's own checks on progress show that in English and mathematics the percentage of higher achieving pupils is expected to be above the national average in 2011. However, the information for all pupils across the school shows that attainment remains below national averages and well below average in writing. Evidence from the newly-introduced pupil tracking system shows pupils' progress is improving and, in most year groups, pupils make at least satisfactory progress, with good progress evident in Year 2. Leaders, managers and members of the governing body are aware that teacher expectations need to be higher and pupils' progress needs to accelerate to enable pupils to reach the standards expected for their age.



New assessment systems are in place to measure the attainment and progress of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics, but these are at an early stage and not always used effectively enough to inform planning and match tasks to the individual abilities of all pupils. The local authority has provided support to improve lesson planning. As a result, long and medium term plans provide a clear sequence and progression for learning. Nevertheless, day-to-day planning does not use assessment information sufficiently well to plan for the differing levels of ability within the class. Consequently, the engagement of pupils' interests in some tasks is diminished.

Class teachers are held to account for the progress of their pupils and professional partnerships provide coaching and support to improve teaching skills and develop a greater understanding of good practice. There is greater consistency in the use of pupils' targets. Pupils know them and find these helpful and use them well to focus on what they need to do to improve their learning. The recently introduced pupil conferences provide a good opportunity to discuss learning. However, although some marking supports pupils to improve their work, this remains inconsistent. As a result, pupils' progress seen in books is satisfactory. There are now greater opportunities and choices for pupils to engage in sporting activities outside of the school day.

The governing body has a clear understanding of the immediate priorities for the school and is increasingly active in checking on the improvements that have been planned. However, the measures of success are not precise enough to enable it to know when its plans have been achieved. There is a need to refine strategic planning to ensure clarity and reduce overlap.

The local authority has provided a wide range of support. Professional development has focused on sharing good practice and developing teachers' skills in assessment. In addition, the governing body has been provided with key questions to support its challenge to school leaders, with regular milestones in place to check on progress and develop monitoring skills. This has increased the school's capacity to sustained further improvements

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

Ann Henderson
Her Majesty's Inspector



Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in February 2010

- Ensure that by December 2010, most teaching is at least good by:
 - ensuring that teachers' planning consistently guides them to challenge and motivate all pupils
 - spreading the effective practice already evident in the school more widely
 - consistently using the improving systems for assessment to ensure all pupils make rapid progress
 - ensuring that all pupils are making good progress by keeping them engaged with the task.
- Ensure that the curriculum enables pupils to make the best possible progress by:
 - using pupils' targets more widely to develop their skills of literacy and numeracy in as wide a range of subjects as possible
 - offering more opportunities for pupils to take part in activities, including sport and exercise, outside of lessons.
- Develop the strategic plan through the use of measures of success that enable governors and other stakeholders to readily measure the progress made, and hence challenge the school to improve further.

