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Mr D Metcalfe
The Headteacher
Capel-le-Ferne Primary School
Capel Street
Folkestone
CT18 7HB

Dear Mr Metcalfe

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Capel-le-Ferne Primary School

Thank you for the help which you, your staff and your pupils gave when I inspected your school on 12 July 2011, for the time you gave to our telephone discussion and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection.

As a result of the inspection on 26 January 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 good progress in making improvements and good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Provisional results in the 2011 national tests for your school's Key Stage 2 pupils showed a substantial improvement on those for 2010. Local authority targets for the proportion of pupils gaining at least Level 4 in English and mathematics were met. Assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 also showed marked improvement. In mathematics, for example, all pupils achieved at least Level 2, which represents a significant improvement on the 2010 results. The introduction of a new assessment scheme and development of a more investigative approach are strengthening attainment and progress in science across the school. In a Year 2 class, for example, pupils were finding out how to test materials for a serviceable jacket to replace Little Red Riding Hood's velvet cloak, and making decisions about how best to record their findings.

Learning activities are more engaging and challenging for most pupils and meet most needs successfully. Progress is carefully measured against the targets and



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objectives set every week. This ensures that slow progress and underachievement are quickly identified and lesson plans appropriately adapted. On occasion, planning focuses on the completion of tasks rather than on the development of pupils' understanding and skills. Pupils are willing rather than challenging learners, keen to meet expectations and to make the most of their teachers' guidance. Effective deployment of teaching assistants, one-to-one tuition for those identified as needing intensive support, and well-pitched activities in class ensure that the less able and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities progress as well as others. More able pupils, however, are not always prompted to explore ideas, to be inventive and imaginative or to take the lead in group activities. Marking is uneven in quality; it does not consistently balance encouragement with specific guidance on how to improve and offers little comment on the quality of ideas and imagination.

Newly-established strategy groups now take responsibility for provision and outcomes in each of the core subjects. They work closely with key stage management teams and, in this way, all staff are involved in the planning and evaluation of teaching and learning and in curriculum development. This approach ensures that, while the distinct character of subjects such as science and mathematics remains clear, the curriculum for each key stage avoids duplication and prompts pupils to apply skills learnt in one subject to challenges presented in another. Opportunities for staff to share ideas and good practice within your school have increased, and are complemented by visits to other schools and by membership of a local consortium. Clear and manageable expectations are set out in school policies and their impact is well monitored by you, your senior staff and, increasingly, members of the governing body.

The proportion of good teaching is increasing. Strengths observed during the monitoring inspection included: confident and enthusiastic subject knowledge; careful planning that incorporated a range of learning approaches; effective use of appropriate technology; generally effective questioning skills; and, an enterprising use of varied resources. Teachers and teaching assistants have a constructive working relationship with pupils, which pupils appreciate. Able pupils do not find the work especially challenging but they, like others, value the care and guidance they receive, reflected in a comment made by several, 'The teachers – they're really kind to us.'

Your evaluation of progress since the previous inspection and your action plan to tackle areas for improvement show an accurate grasp of the school's strengths and relative weaknesses. Regular monitoring of teaching and learning is shaping staff's professional development more effectively. Detailed assessment of pupils' progress against frequently reviewed targets is firmly underpinning the quality of lesson planning. Procedures for ensuring pupils' safety and well-being are thorough. Rising attainment, a positively evolving curriculum, clearer accountability and strengthened staff morale indicate your school's good progress in establishing better capacity for further improvement.



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

Patricia Metham
Her Majesty's Inspector



Annex

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

- Raise attainment and achievement, particularly in maths and science by:
 - providing pupils with learning activities which are challenging and better matched to their needs.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring that teachers make better use of assessment information to plan lessons that build on and extend what pupils already know
 - enabling teachers to share best practice.
- Improve senior leaders' use of information gleaned from monitoring activities to identify areas for improvement more sharply.

