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15 September 2011

Mrs Myers  
Headteacher  
Viking Road  
Maldon  
CM9 6JN

Dear Mrs Myers

### **Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Wentworth Primary School**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 14 September 2011, for the time you gave to our telephone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please pass on my thanks to your staff for the professional way in which they conducted themselves and to the pupils whose manners and good behaviour were a pleasure to see. I am also grateful to the parents and carers who took time to speak to me at the school gate and to the Chair of the Governing Body, who found time to join the final feedback.

Four members of staff left during the spring and summer terms, two following discussions regarding professional competency. Temporary staff were brought in to teach two classes for the remainder of the school year. Four new permanent staff were appointed at the beginning of the current academic year including two newly-qualified teachers.

As a result of the inspection on 29 April 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 inadequate progress in making improvements. However, recent staffing changes now mean the school has made satisfactory progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

The 2011 teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 and the results of the Year 6 National Tests showed improvement in English and a notable improvement in mathematics in both key stages. However, the school has accurately identified that higher achieving pupils at Key Stage 1 do not make sufficient progress when in Key Stage 2. The weakness evident in writing, identified in the previous inspection, remains. Furthermore, data provided by the school show that in Key Stage 2, only

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an average of 44% of pupils in each year group made the expected or better progress in writing. The pupils' improved performance in mathematics and reading is in contrast with the significant weaknesses that remain in their writing.

A scrutiny of the pupils' work from the last academic year, shows significant variation in pupils' progress and the standards of work accepted by teachers. The headteacher's reports to the governing body for this time make it clear that, with the effective help of the local authority, senior staff took appropriate action to address the weaknesses in pupil progress and the quality of teaching. This resulted in a number of teachers leaving before the end of the school year.

Her Majesty's Inspector visited eight lessons, observing teaching in all year groups. Senior staff were invited to join the inspector on each occasion and in a formal review of the quality of teaching. The observations made by senior staff matched the judgements of the inspector. The school's current format for recording observations about the quality of teaching do not match the formal rigour senior staff displayed during this review of teaching. Most teaching and learning seen was satisfactory and good on two occasions. Assessment was used to plan all lessons and some good practice was evident. In the most effective lessons pace and challenge were well-matched to the pupils learning needs and they in turn responded well to the teachers' comments and guidance. In a good Year 6 mathematics lesson investigating 3D shape, all pupils grasped the varying properties of different shapes and could use subject specific vocabulary well. Good use was made of 'Teach the Cat' where a team of the most successful pupils guided their peers through the discoveries they had made. Similarly, in an effective Year 5 literacy lesson drawing stimulus from famous paintings, pupils used vibrant adjectives and accurate punctuation to finalise their poetry.

Her Majesty's Inspector observed good behaviour and the parents spoke positively about the school. Attendance has been above average for some time. Safeguarding arrangements meet current government requirements. This inspection has raised some concerns regarding pupil progress most notably in writing and it is this matter that requires significant improvement. However, the robust action taken by senior staff and the governing body to strengthen the teaching has enhanced the school's capacity to improve.

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

*David Jones*  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## Annex

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in April 2010.**

Raise pupils' attainment further and ensure consistent good progress by:

- improving teaching and learning to a consistently good level
- making more precise use of assessment to plan lessons
- ensuring that there is always sufficient challenge for more able pupils
- making sure that pupils respond to the comments for improvement and follow up suggestions made by their teachers
- ensuring the headteacher and senior team monitor teaching and learning with sufficient rigour and precision to inform planning for improvement
- using the outcomes of monitoring to prioritise and drive improvements at a good rate
- ensuring that governors hold the school to account and challenge areas of underachievement.