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23 February 2012

Mrs Emma Allen  
Headteacher  
Corbets Tey School  
Harwood Hall Lane  
Upminster  
Essex  
RM14 2YQ

Dear Mrs Allen

### **Notice to improve: monitoring inspection of Corbets Tey School**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 22 February 2012 and for the information which you provided during the inspection. Please pass on my thanks to the pupils, members of the governing body, parents, carers and colleagues from the school as well as the local authority who contributed.

The leadership of the school has undergone some changes since the school was last inspected. The headteacher, who was previously deputy headteacher, took up post in January 2012 and a new deputy headteacher joined the school at this time.

As a result of the inspection on 19 and 20 October 2011, 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 is making good progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the pupils' achievement.

The information held by the school on achievement this year enables it to analyse and support pupils' progress more accurately. Target setting is increasingly precise and linked to P levels or National Curriculum levels. This enables senior leaders to track progress more closely and identify more securely which pupils make satisfactory or better progress over time. Reflecting the school's specialist status for communication and interaction, the focus on supporting the progress of pupils who have severe communication and behavioural needs has a particularly good impact.

Supported by excellent administration, the school's processes for ensuring the safety of the pupils have been significantly improved. Arrangements and policies for safeguarding have been revised and are now in line with government requirements. Site security has been a high priority and there are appropriate plans in place to further improve monitored access to the school building. The governing body has reviewed its processes and now ensures that it fulfils its statutory duties and will continue to do so. All staff have attended appropriate safeguarding training and their attendance on these courses is now recorded. Staff who were spoken to during the inspection were clear about their roles and responsibilities and parents and carers expressed their strong confidence in the school's ability to safeguard their children. Pupils, too, demonstrate that they enjoy taking supervised risks within a safe and secure environment.

Much work has been done to support teachers in improving their practice within the context of an agreed 'Learning and Well-being Charter'. Opportunities to share ideas with colleagues have enabled staff to re-evaluate the impact of their teaching and to make well-focused improvements where necessary. Improved planning helps teachers to ensure that lessons are taught at a good pace and that time is not wasted. Measurable learning objectives support pupils' learning on an individual as well as whole-class basis. Teaching assistants make an increasingly strong contribution where their roles are well planned and their skills used effectively to support pupils working at different levels within the class. Very good relationships and improved levels of challenge mean that pupils enjoy the activities that are planned for them and this increases the rate at which they learn. Senior leaders are aware that, following a strong focus on lesson planning and delivery, an evaluation of the progress made by each pupil in every lesson will further support the information they have about the effectiveness of teaching across the school.

Despite their relatively short time in post, senior leaders have had a marked impact. Their commitment to whole-school involvement is evident and greatly appreciated by their colleagues. Areas of relative weakness are being addressed appropriately. Middle leaders play a more consistent role within the school and in monitoring the planning and delivery of their subjects. Subject leaders are aware that they have a key part to play in ensuring that responsibility and accountability for pupils' progress is held by all. The governing body has changed considerably since the last inspection. Committees are clear about their roles and ways in which they must hold the school to account as well as fulfil their statutory duties. Members are adamant that they will not, as one described it, 'Peak and drop off'.

The school continues to use its specialist status well to develop and maintain partnerships which benefit pupils both in this school and others within the local authority.

The support and challenge provided by the local authority are much appreciated by the school. Its action plan, already deemed 'fit for purpose', is being used well as a working document against which both the school and the local authority can

measure progress. While the focus was rightly initially on improving safeguarding arrangements, input from the local authority is now more strongly geared towards helping the school to develop and improve its educational practices.

The commitment shared by all for continuing school improvement is evident. As one member of staff said, 'This school has been like a ship waiting in the dock; it's sailing now and I want to be on it.'

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

Anne Duffy

**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in October 2011.**

- Meet safeguarding regulations and duties by ensuring that:
  - arrangements and policies for safeguarding are in line with government requirements and are systematically reviewed
  - the governing body fulfils its statutory duties regarding its overview of safeguarding policies and procedures
  - all staff are provided with appropriate safeguarding training and their attendance on the courses is recorded.
  
- Improve teaching and learning so that more is good or better by:
  - improving teachers' planning for learning, including the development of precise and measurable learning objectives
  - ensuring that teaching assistants are effectively deployed to support and challenge pupils' learning
  - raising the pace of learning to fully engage pupils throughout their lessons.
  
- Improve leadership and management at all levels by:
  - extending the role of subject leaders to include rigorous self-review and the effective monitoring of provision and outcomes for their subject
  - defining clear roles and responsibilities for all of the school leaders to ensure that every aspect of school management is fully covered.