

Cambridge Education  
Demeter House  
Station Road  
Cambridge  
CB1 2RS

T 08456 40 40 40  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

Direct T 01223 578500  
Direct F 01223 578501  
risp.inspections@camb-ed.com



25 June 2009

Mrs Lella Yates  
Interim Headteacher  
Westwood Primary School  
Beresford Close  
Hadleigh  
Benfleet  
Essex  
SS7 2SU

Dear Mrs Yates

Ofsted monitoring of schools with a notice to improve

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on Wednesday 3 June 2009, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during my visit.

Since the previous inspection the substantive headteacher resigned in February 2009. A local authority advisory headteacher was appointed on an interim, full time basis and will remain in post until a newly appointed, substantive headteacher takes up his post in January 2010. Other changes to staffing include the agreed departure at the end of this term of two Year 3 and 4 class teachers. A local authority representative has joined the governors and a multi-use community hall has opened on the school site.

As a result of the inspection on 19–20 November 2008, the school was asked to improve senior leadership to ensure that all staff act swiftly to improve provision, ensure that pupils make good overall progress by improving the use of outcomes of the school's tracking systems, and improve the standard of teaching in Years 3 and 4 to match those in the rest of the school. Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making satisfactory progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the pupils' achievement.

Continued inadequate leadership led to very little progress being made at the start of this year. Since February 2009, the school has operated far more effectively because the interim headteacher has provided clear, coherent leadership and acted promptly and decisively to put the school back on track. She has addressed some long-standing staffing issues that were preventing pupils achieving their full potential and has also refocused the efforts of other staff towards raising standards and achievement and ensuring that all pupils receive a much better quality of education. Staff are working collaboratively and collectively as a team which is helping to build



capacity to make the necessary improvements. Governance remains satisfactory but subject leadership requires further strengthening, particularly in core subjects.

Improvement plans agreed with the local authority have been complimented by further 'mini' action plans to fully address weaknesses and raise pupil achievement, particularly in Key Stage 2. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have been reorganised into classes of similar ability and additional staff have been re-allocated to Year 3 and 4 classes to accelerate pupil progress. Most teachers now take time during lessons to share what is to be learnt and summarise how well pupils have done. Teachers use success criteria to encourage pupils to check their own learning and ask them to use 'traffic lights' to illustrate how well they understand. Agreed expectations for lesson planning and teaching are giving teachers a better understanding of what constitutes effective teaching and learning. Less progress has been made in planning different activities to meet the needs of all learners.

Teachers have received training on assessing pupils' progress which has increased their understanding of how well pupils are achieving. They regularly collate assessment data into a centralised system and this is helping to track how well individual pupils and different groups of them are progressing. Regular meetings take place to analyse this information to identify which pupils are progressing satisfactorily and to target additional support towards those pupils who are under-achieving. Teachers are beginning to use this information to set targets for pupils but this is not firmly embedded. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 can explain what their personal targets are and what level they are working at, but younger pupils in Years 3 and 4 do not know their targets. These new procedures are beginning to have an impact on standards and progress. For example, the latest assessment data shows that a significant proportion of Year 6 pupils who were at risk of not meeting national expectations in English and mathematics have made significant gains this term. Current data shows that almost eighty per cent of Year 6 pupils are predicted to attain at least level 4 in English and mathematics in this year's national tests. Overall, pupils make better progress in English and science than in mathematics.

In Years 3 and 4, two-thirds of pupils have made improved progress as a result of direct action to improve teaching and learning. The deputy headteacher has assumed responsibility for teaching literacy and numeracy in one class and this is beginning to have a significant impact on raising pupils' achievement. Teacher assistants are providing effective additional support for groups of less-able pupils and are helping to tackle gaps in pupils' knowledge and accelerate their progress. Regular lesson monitoring by the headteacher and the local authority is ensuring that in general, the standard of teaching is rising. However, despite the intensive support and sensitive management provided by the interim headteacher, lesson quality remains inadequate in one of the Year 3 classes. This continues to have a detrimental effect upon pupils' progress and means that targets in the improvement plan to increase the proportion of satisfactory or better lessons by this stage of the year have not been met. Scrutiny of pupils' work is helping to improve the quality of

teachers' marking but this has not yet led to greater consistency in target setting or improving the presentation of pupils' work.

The local authority has made an important contribution to bolstering school leadership and improving the quality of provision. Its support for the school is valued by senior leaders, teachers and governors. Plans are under way to facilitate a smooth transition from the interim headteacher to a permanent, substantive headteacher in January 2010. The school is well placed to build upon the satisfactory progress made so far and make further substantial improvements.

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

Yours sincerely

John Mitcheson  
Her Majesty's Inspector.