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Mr Richard Hatt  
Headteacher  
Westbury Church of England Junior School  
Oldfield Park  
Westbury  
Wiltshire  
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Dear Mr Hatt

**Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Westbury Church of England Junior School**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 12 July 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 9 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 good progress in making improvements and good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Attainment is now average in English and mathematics. The gap between the school performance and national expectations at the end of Year 6 has significantly narrowed, as can be seen in the most recent national tests for 2011. School data show that from pupils starting points this represents good progress. Higher achieving pupils have exceeded the improvement targets set for English and mathematics at the last inspection. School tracking data show that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are making good progress. This is because interventions are timely and sharply focused on improving levels of attainment.

Pupils use passports for literacy and numeracy which provide them with a clear reference for assessing how well they are doing. Pupils can talk about how to improve their work. In mathematics pupils are fully involved in assessing their performance and complete their passports as they progress through each level. The

passports are effective as an assessment tool in English, but the school acknowledges that involving pupils in recording their good progress is less developed.

Pupils' very positive attitudes to learning mean that they enjoy the challenges set in lessons. At the start of a mathematics lesson pupils were keen to use their skills of mental arithmetic to complete a calculation grid. In an English lesson focusing on poetry the younger pupils rose to the challenge well when set the task of writing a poem about feelings using similes. One pupil wrote, 'Happiness tastes like ice-cream.' Higher achieving pupils used imagery to link emotions to colours, for example, describing why jealousy was purple. In the same lesson all pupils worked independently for a considerable time and as a result produced work of a good standard.

The now effective teaching is underpinned by higher expectations from teachers and better use of assessment information relating to pupils' prior learning when planning lessons. A particular strength is how teachers use assessment during lessons. This means that they reshape tasks to provide more challenge or develop the work further to support pupils' understanding. In a mathematics lesson for the oldest pupils, in preparation for their secondary education, the teacher skilfully explained how to add and subtract hundreds, tens and units using a shortened method. Those pupils who understood the principle easily were quickly given more complex examples to complete. Those who needed more support were helped by simplifying the work. Consequently, all pupils were supported in making good progress in a new area of work because tasks were practical and pitched well to challenge individuals and groups of pupils.

Teachers' marking helps pupils to improve their work. The consistency of marking throughout the school is a strength, and pupils talk about how they respond to the advice given. Where marking is most effective it provides a challenge which helps pupils consolidate their skills in order to apply them across the curriculum. For example, pupils link literacy and geography skills to compile a travel guide to St Lucia. The work in English books is generally well marked. However, occasionally, not enough attention is paid to picking up basic errors and poor presentation, which may prevent some pupils achieving higher standards.

The relentless drive and ambition of the leadership team in improving the quality of teaching and use of assessment has led to the acceleration of pupils' progress. Actions taken mean that staff have a greater accountability for assessing the progress of the pupils in their class. As a result of training, teaching assistants use assessment well to follow the progress of pupils they are working with. Regular reviews of pupils' progress with teachers have ensured that pupils' performance is tracked systematically and those in danger of not making progress are quickly identified. Leaders and managers use a range of assessment information more effectively to plan interventions.

The governing body has a clearer understanding of its roles and responsibilities. Governors are committed to raising the achievement of all pupils. They are well informed through the headteacher's reports. Senior staff make presentations to governors on topics such as assessment and this has led to a better understanding of the school's performance in relation to national expectations. Consequently, governors now have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas for development. The formation of a core group of governors, who report back to the full governing body on areas for improvement, has strengthened the focus on self-evaluation. As a result, the governing body is better placed to monitor the work of the school.

The school has made good use of the effective support from the School Improvement Partner in working with and training staff and governors. This has had a major impact on improving performance. Governors now feel empowered to ask questions and challenge the school about the effectiveness of actions taken, such as improved assessment procedures and changes in the deployment of teaching assistants to support potentially vulnerable pupils. Such actions taken have supported the school well, and enabled leaders to enhance strengthening of 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

Jane Neech  
Her Majesty's Inspector

## Annex

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

- By July 2011, ensure 86% of pupils leave Year 6 with attainment in English and mathematics that is at the expected level for their age and at least 30% leave with higher attainment. To achieve this:
  - provide consistently challenging work which develops each subject's specific skills and also provides pupils with the opportunity to use these skills across a wide variety of other subjects
  - make the best use of practical and independent work to help raise the progress of all pupils and especially those who are capable of achieving higher levels
  - raise the level of the satisfactory teaching to that of the best.
- Use the wide range of assessment data more effectively to:
  - quickly identify any pupils or groups of pupils who are underachieving and so provide them with the right type of support
  - use previously acquired assessment information to plan individual lessons that are challenging for everybody.