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12 May 2011

Mr R Beel  
Headteacher  
Woodlands Primary School  
Pinewood Crescent  
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Lincolnshire  
DN33 1RJ

Dear Mr Beel

### **Special measures: monitoring inspection of Woodlands Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 10 to 11 May 2011, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

The inspection was the third monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in April 2010. The full list of the areas for improvement which were identified during that inspection is set out in the annex to this letter. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – good

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – good

I am copying the letter and monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for North East Lincolnshire.

Yours sincerely

Mr John Rutherford  
Her Majesty's Inspector

January 2011



## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place on 21 April 2010**

- Raise attainment and improve achievement in English and mathematics by:
  - identifying specific areas of weakness in each subject
  - devising plans to eliminate the identified weaknesses
  - planning work which matches the specific needs of pupils
  - ensuring that teaching is good or better in all lessons.
  
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it is consistently good or better by:
  - identifying and eradicating weaknesses in teaching across the school
  - implementing a programme of support for those teachers identified as having weaknesses in their practice
  - concentrating on improving the quality of learning in lessons.
  
- Ensure that leaders and managers put the necessary improvements into place by:
  - fully involving all staff and the governing body in evaluating the school's performance
  - working together to plan and implement effective strategies to remedy the weaknesses in the school's work
  - ensuring that continued monitoring of the school's performance is rigorous and accurate and results in improvements.

## **Special measures: monitoring of Woodlands Primary School**

### **Report from the third monitoring inspection on 10 to 11 May 2011**

#### **Evidence**

The inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and records of pupils' progress and analysed pupils' work. He met with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Local Authority School Recovery Officer.

#### **Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning**

Lesson observations, analysis of pupils' work and school assessment records show that the proportion of pupils making better than expected progress in English has increased considerably since the previous monitoring inspection. This is largely due to a significant improvement in pupils' writing, which is a result of the high priority given to providing more effective teaching in this subject by all staff. A year ago, attainment in writing was much lower than in other subjects, but the gap is now closing rapidly in all classes. The greatest improvement is in upper Key Stage 2. Teachers have not given so much priority to improving teaching in reading and mathematics; nevertheless, pupils' progress is also improving in these subjects, though not at the same rapid rate as in writing, and not so consistently in every class. As a result of their improving progress, the proportion of pupils attaining levels expected for their age in English and mathematics is increasing in all classes. This attainment is still not as high as it should be because the improvements to teaching and pupils' progress are so recent.

Since the previous monitoring inspection, there is a marked improvement in the progress of the more-able pupils in the majority of classes because teachers are much better at planning activities that provide more challenge for this group. Underachieving pupils are catching up more quickly because school leaders are making better use of assessment information to help teachers and teaching assistants plan programmes of additional support appropriate to their needs. The progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is more consistently in line with that of other pupils as a result of more detailed and regular review of their outcomes, leading to more effective support from teachers and teaching assistants.

Pupils' enthusiasm for learning and their enjoyment of work have increased significantly since the previous monitoring inspection because more teachers are providing interesting and stimulating lessons.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on the areas for improvement:

- Raise attainment and improve achievement in English and mathematics – good

## **Other relevant pupil outcomes**

Pupils' behaviour and attendance continue to be strengths of the school, making a significant contribution to their improving progress. In lessons, pupils work very well independently. They have good skills in co-operating with others and they use discussion effectively to help them to solve problems or investigate new ideas. Older pupils are particularly skilful in discussing emotions when, for example, evaluating a film. A minority of teachers are not yet using discussion sufficiently to help pupils extend their understanding and their speaking skills.

School development plans show that the pupils' learning council continues to make a strong positive contribution to identifying those aspects of teaching that need to be improved, for example, independent learning and a more stimulating learning environment. Teachers have taken the council's views on board and are improving these aspects of teaching and learning.

## **The effectiveness of provision**

Pupils' progress is improving more rapidly because the leadership team's hard work to raise the quality of teaching has started to show a significant positive impact. The improvement is most evident where teaching was least effective; consequently, the amount of inadequate teaching has been greatly reduced. At the same time, good teaching has replaced much of the practice that was previously satisfactory. Lessons have improved because pupils are no longer required to sit and listen for long periods: they are provided with interesting, challenging problem-solving tasks that they can work on independently. Some teachers are not yet enabling their pupils to make good progress because they are moving too quickly from one planned task to the next. Pupils are therefore given insufficient opportunity to deepen their understanding and teachers do not spend sufficient time assessing pupils' progress in order to provide immediate support or challenge if required.

In general, teachers are becoming more skilful in planning activities that help all groups of pupils to accelerate their progress in lessons. This is supported well by a system for giving pupils short-term targets that clearly remind them what they need to concentrate on in each piece of work. Teachers organise learning resources very effectively so that each group can get on with their work with the minimum of adult direction. Interesting cross-curricular themes are increasingly used to extend pupils' writing skills, for example, when they were challenged to provide explanations and evaluations linked to their waste recycling project. Teaching assistants help their groups of pupils to improve their progress by providing interesting learning activities based on everyday experience, for example, using a till receipt as the focus for a mathematics lesson.

There have been significant improvements in the curriculum and quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 since the previous monitoring inspection. A newly-appointed Key Stage 1 leader introduced these improvements following a visit to observe effective practice in another school. Although the new approaches are still not fully embedded, there is already a

considerable improvement in pupils' enthusiasm for learning and in their progress. This is because learning activities in a range of subjects, including literacy and numeracy, are linked to very interesting, real-life problem-solving situations, such as preparing a royal wedding celebration. All activities have a clear learning objective and adults understand how to help pupils make good progress towards this objective. The quality of adults' discussion with pupils is therefore improving considerably. There are plenty of opportunities for pupils to develop their independence in learning as well as to benefit from well-planned adult-directed activities. Different levels of challenge within each activity enable all groups of pupils to extend their skills.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on the areas for improvement:

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it is consistently good or better – good

### **The effectiveness of leadership and management**

The quality of teaching and pupils' progress has started to improve at a good rate because the helpful guidance provided by the leadership team is becoming embedded in the work of more teachers. The capacity of the leadership team to provide effective guidance has recently been strengthened by two new members appointed from within the school. Leaders systematically and frequently evaluate lessons, pupils' work and planning, and follow this up with clear feedback on how these can be improved. This feedback is becoming increasingly useful as leaders become more skilful in showing teachers how their methods are affecting pupils' outcomes.

As part of their increased focus on pupils' outcomes, the leadership team is becoming more skilful in analysing progress data. This is giving them a much clearer picture of where the peaks and troughs in progress are and, therefore, what the priorities need to be in improvement planning. They also use the data well to review each pupil's progress with their class teacher to ensure that everything is being done to raise their achievement.

The leadership team's improvement plan is practical and manageable. There are clear, quantitative success criteria by which its impact on the quality of provision and pupils' outcomes can be evaluated. The regular updates to the plan demonstrate the leadership team's constructive response to external evaluation. They also show an openness to learn from good practice in other schools. A sign of the leadership team's growing capacity is their increasing analysis of external guidance in order to mould it to suit the needs of their own school. The leadership team and administrative staff give high priority to keeping pupils safe and all required arrangements are in place.

Members of the governing body are continuing to improve their support for the school. This is both in terms of helping school leaders to ensure that sufficient good quality staff and other resources are in place and by helping them to evaluate the impact of the new methods being introduced. For example, the Chair has kept a close check on the changes being introduced in Key Stage 1 and is able to assure the governing body that they are

worthwhile. The Chair and members of the governing body who are on the standards and monitoring committee have an increasingly detailed understanding of strengths and weaknesses in the school's progress. Notes from committee meetings show that they challenge both the school and the local authority to make sure that provision for pupils is improving.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on the areas for improvement:

- Improve self-evaluation and ensure that it leads to improvement in the quality of teaching and standards – good

### **External support**

The Local Authority School Recovery Officer and School Improvement Partner continue to keep the school under close review. They provide useful guidance and, in negotiation with school leaders, they ensure that appropriate support is provided. Local authority consultants have worked effectively in partnership with school leaders to improve the quality of teaching where most necessary. The local authority has appointed two new members to the governing body, which has begun to strengthen their work further.