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21 September 2012

Diane Lawry  
Executive Headteacher  
Woodcroft Primary School  
37 Woodcroft Lane  
Waterlooville  
Hampshire  
PO8 9QD

Dear Ms Lawry

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

Following my visit to your school on 19 and 20 September 2012, 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 July 2011. 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

Newly qualified teachers may be appointed.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be posted on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Hampshire.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Russell  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## Annex

### The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in July 2011

- Raise attainment in reading, writing and mathematics so that by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, levels are at least in line with national averages by:
  - providing a curriculum that is tailored to the needs and interests of pupils and includes more opportunities, across the curriculum, for pupils to write
  - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve and setting more challenging targets
  - making better use of data and assessment information to help drive and embed improvements.
  
- Increase the proportion of teaching and learning that is good or better by ensuring that:
  - when planning lessons, teachers take full account of pupils' prior learning and different abilities
  - lesson plans include a clearly identified progression of skills, especially for the more able
  - teaching and support staff are well informed about how best to meet the individual needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities
  - teachers assess pupils' progress during the course of lessons and amend their teaching accordingly to maintain a good pace of learning
  - lessons include a good range of visual clues and a stronger emphasis on new and unfamiliar vocabulary
  - all lessons are taught in a meaningful and purposeful context.
  
- Raise levels of attendance so they are at least in line with the national average by:
  - working more closely with parents and carers to help them understand the impact that unnecessary absence has on the education and well-being of their children.
  
- Improve the behaviour of pupils and the extent to which they feel safe in school by:
  - ensuring staff respond quickly and effectively to pupils' concerns and anxieties in lessons and around the school site
  - following up issues and the extent to which they have been successfully resolved
  - reviewing the behaviour log at regular intervals to identify any patterns of behaviour that require more rigorous intervention and support
  - ensuring that all pupils know what to do when they feel unable to resolve disputes for themselves, and increasing their confidence in staff to help when needed

- raising the confidence of parents and carers about the extent to which the school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour.
- Develop leadership and management across the school by ensuring that:
  - action and improvement plans reflect the school's priorities and include measurable success criteria and a clear focus on outcomes for learners
  - levels of attainment and the progress made by different groups of pupils are tracked and reported on by leaders and managers in their areas of responsibility
  - leaders, managers and staff are held to account for the progress made by pupils
  - all statutory requirements are met including evaluating the impact of the school's policy for equality of opportunity and communicating findings to staff, parents, carers and the Interim Executive Board
  - evaluations are rooted in secure evidence and provide precise information about the impact of the school's work on different groups of pupils.

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

### **Report from the third monitoring inspection on 19 and 20 September 2012**

#### **Evidence**

The inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the executive headteacher, head of school, parents, the Chair of the Governing Body and other governors, representatives from the local authority, the special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders, other staff and groups of pupils.

#### **Context**

Woodcroft continues to work as part of a federation with Mill Hill Primary School in Waterlooville. An executive headteacher provides leadership for the federation and a head of school provides day-to-day leadership at Woodcroft. A seconded deputy headteacher from a local school undertook this role last year. A substantive head of school took up post at the start of this term.

The school is fully staffed. One new teacher joined in September.

#### **Achievement of pupils at the school**

Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics continues to rise.

Children who left Reception in July achieved much more during the school year than children did in the previous year. Writing was the weakest area, although Reception children's achievement in writing was still better than in 2011. Pupils are typically making better progress in lessons because teaching has improved. Higher-ability pupils are making better progress because they are challenged more.

Key Stage 2 national test results improved in 2012. There were rises in all areas, although no pupil attained a Level 5. Pupils' attainment in mathematics was particularly strong. These pupils made expected progress given their starting points at the end of Key Stage 1. Year 2 national assessment levels also improved in all areas last year.

Pupils' achievement is tracked closely and the results analysed each half term. The results of this tracking show that pupils across the school typically made at least expected progress last year; in many cases they made rapid gains. This was particularly the case in reading; progress in writing was not as strong. Although pupils are generally some way from the expected levels for their ages, attainment is now rising quickly and these gaps are closing.

Many pupils' weak speaking and listening skills remain a major barrier to their progress. Staff recognise this and are providing a range of useful support. Many pupils' basic reading skills improved significantly last year because they were given intensive support. However, in some cases their comprehension skills lag behind and they struggle to make sense of what they are now able to read. Staff recognise this and are providing additional support for these pupils in small groups. It is too early to gauge the full impact of this work.

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

- Raise attainment in reading, writing and mathematics so that by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, levels are at least in line with national averages – good

### **The quality of teaching**

The improvements in teaching have continued: there is now more good teaching. Pupils confirm this and say that lessons are more interesting and challenging. Parents and carers recognise the improvements and say that their children are now much more enthusiastic about school.

Staff have worked hard to correct the weaknesses identified at the time of the last inspection. Higher-ability pupils are typically provided with more challenging work and teachers now rarely spend too long on a particular lesson activity. However, at times teachers do not make good use of the end of the lesson to check or consolidate what pupils have learned.

Pupils who work with the teacher during guided reading sessions receive valuable support and typically make good progress. However, pupils working without adult supervision during these sessions are not always able to make sufficient progress. This is because the work that they are given is sometimes too easy, too repetitive or too difficult without additional adult help.

Useful work is being done to strengthen teachers' planning in the foundation subjects, although much of this work is at a relatively early stage.

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

- Increase the proportion of teaching and learning that is good or better – good

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Behaviour continues to improve and pupils now typically behave well in lessons and around the school. Pupils recognise the improvement. They say that, while there is occasional disruption from a few pupils, this is now rare and staff deal with it well. Pupils are typically more resilient and able to work for longer periods of time on their

own. However, some struggle to concentrate and have a tendency to drift off task at times.

Any incidents of misbehaviour are carefully tracked and followed up. A range of additional support is provided where necessary. The numbers of incidents have fallen sharply. Pupils generally play well together during play and lunchtimes, and the school is doing good work to eradicate the occasional incident of rough play. Pupils find staff helpful and approachable, and are happy to seek help if they need to. They say that bullying is now rare and that staff work hard to deal with any incidents that do occur.

A wide range of valuable work is underway to reduce absence. Any absences are tracked carefully and any pupils with poor attendance are followed up tenaciously. Attendance levels are improving gradually, although they are still quite low. The proportion of pupils with attendance below 80% fell last year and more pupils achieved a level of at least 90% attendance.

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

- Improve the behaviour of pupils and the extent to which they feel safe in school – good
- Raise levels of attendance so that they are at least in line with national averages – satisfactory

### **The quality of leadership in and management of the school**

The executive headteacher continues to provide strong and effective leadership. Leadership across the school is developing well. Plans to support improvement are clear, detailed and evaluated carefully. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development, and are playing a valuable role in its improvement. Staff morale is good.

The way in which staff track and analyse pupils' achievement is a significant strength; it plays a key role in the school's improvement. The results of this tracking give staff a very clear picture of each pupil's achievement and help them to spot any general patterns across the school. They make full use of this information to direct additional support to individual pupils. The system now usefully includes information about pupils' attendance. It is being developed to provide a clearer analysis of the progress made by different ability groups.

Leaders check and monitor the school's progress well. The focus is rightly on observing and improving classroom teaching. There is a good balance of observations of individual teachers to check their practice and more general observations across the school to spot common strengths and potential areas for development in teaching. Individual teachers are given tailored support and training to help them to improve; the impact of this work is clear.

A particular development over the past term has been in the work across the federation's two schools. Staff from the two schools increasingly work together and share good practice. They have benefited from joint training and professional development. A number of support staff now work across the two schools.

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

- Develop leadership and management across the school – good

### **External support**

The level of local authority monitoring has sensibly been reduced to reflect the school's increasing capacity and effectiveness. Monitoring visits are carried out in the half term following each HMI visit. The resulting reports are clear and succinct, and they provide the school's leaders with valuable advice. A range of other support is provided by the local authority, carefully matched to the school's current needs. Good plans are in place for the school and local authority to provide middle leadership training for a significant number of teachers across the federation's two schools.