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11 March 2013

Mrs Alison Evans  
Headteacher  
Woodslee Primary School  
Croft Avenue  
Bromborough  
Wirral  
CH62 2BP

Dear Mrs Evans

### **Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 to Woodslee Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 8 March 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on the findings of my visit. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in January 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders and managers, three members of the governing body and two local authority officers. The school improvement plan, minutes from governing body minutes and the school's monitoring records were also evaluated. The inspector visited each classroom to meet staff and pupils.

### **Context**

There have been few changes to the school's context since the January inspection. One teacher remains absent. This position is being covered by a temporary teacher who took up post in February.

### **Main findings**

The recent inspection has galvanised senior leaders and strengthened their resolve to become a good school. There is an honest acceptance of the school's weaknesses and a shared understanding of what needs to happen to become better. However,

the planned actions to bring about improvement are not providing a clear enough road-map to shape the school's journey to become good. This is because the small steps the school needs to take are not sharp enough and the ultimate goals for the school's future success lack clarity. There is insufficient detail about how leaders will check on the impact of their actions and too little attention has been given to the role of the governing body in supporting and challenging the school's progress. Nonetheless, the school is acting earnestly to bring about change and has taken immediate action to tackle some of the key shortcomings. A new system to collect and analyse information about pupils' achievement is in place, the marking policy has been reviewed and the strategies for promoting good attendance are leading to a tougher stance on absence and punctuality.

No time has been lost in checking on the quality of teaching and learning through lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work. This is particularly helpful in making sure teachers' marking is providing pupils with greater guidance to improve their work. Although senior leaders are completing these tasks frequently, teachers are not crystal clear about the steps they need to take to improve because the feedback they receive lacks precision. Staff are embracing the changes and are keen to succeed. They are working in partnership with the local authority to refresh their teaching skills and accelerate pupils' progress.

The governing body are responding positively to the inspection findings. They are determined similar criticisms will not be levelled at them or the school at the next inspection. They are devoting a considerable amount of time to updating their own skills and visiting the school to gather first-hand evidence so they have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

Senior leaders and governors have begun to take effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. Following the visit to the school, HMI recommends that further action is taken to:

- radically review the school improvement plan so there is a clear road map for the school improvement journey with sharp goals for success
- identify the small steps that need to be taken to bring about improvement and ensure there are clear strategies in place to monitor the impact of the school's work, involving the governing body fully in this process
- improve the quality of feedback from monitoring activities so teachers have a clear understanding of the precise steps they need to take to improve.

Ofsted will continue to monitor the school until its next section 5 inspection.

### **External support**

Senior leaders and governors appreciate the excellent support provided by the local authority. This support is having a positive influence on almost every aspect of the school's improvement work. Weekly visits by local authority officers are helping senior leaders keep track of their progress. The local authority have already completed a teaching and learning review which is proving helpful in identifying emerging strengths and targeting resources to priority areas. Members of the governing body are benefitting from local authority guidance on roles and responsibilities. They have a much better understanding of school performance data

as a result of the training they have received. Support from local authority consultants is helping teachers and subject leaders enhance their skills through one-to-one support and whole-school training.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Wirral.

Yours sincerely

Joanne Olsson

**Her Majesty's Inspector**