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11 September 2014

Mr S Tewes  
Headteacher  
The Woodside Primary Academy  
Wood Street  
London  
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Dear Mr Tewes

**Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to The Woodside Primary Academy**

Following my visit to your school on 11 September 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the findings. 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 April 2014. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection.

**Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you and other senior leaders, representatives of the governing body and a representative of the academy sponsor to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school development plan was evaluated. I joined you and other senior leaders on a tour of the school, looked at pupils' books from the previous school year and spoke with a group of your middle leaders. I also viewed a sample of minutes from meetings and some assessment evidence held by the academy.

## **Context**

Since the last inspection several new teachers have been appointed. 17 classes now have two teachers attached to them working together. A head of school has been appointed and the structures of the senior and middle leadership teams have been revised. Some senior and middle leaders are new to their roles and some are new to the school. The number of middle leaders has increased. Pupil numbers continue to grow. While they do there are variations in the number of classes in each year group.

## **Main findings**

Your plans for improvement explain in detail how you intend to tackle all the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. You have coupled these plans with an extensive programme of recruitment and reorganisation of staff. The plans identify time for leaders to check on teaching and support the professional development of colleagues. The style of your plan allows the key priorities to be seen at a glance. The fine detail can be discovered by delving more deeply. Actions are set against purposeful timescales. Interim measures of success are identified and written in clear language. There are direct links between improvements in teaching and expected gains in pupil achievement.

The middle leadership team has been expanded. Its members express confidence in the way your senior leaders are developing their skills further. They appreciate the opportunities available to reflect on their leadership with more experienced colleagues. Middle leaders understand your plans for improvement and can explain how they will be held to account for their impact on pupil progress and the quality of teaching.

Your own assessment information indicates that achievement by the end of each key stage is improving. However, you and other leaders know that some pupils need to exceed expected progress in order to make up for underachievement in the past.

Your plans focus strongly on improving the teaching which is not yet good. Teachers new to the school have still to prove their effectiveness and gain experience. You have realised that one of the key barriers to improvement was a lack of consistency in teaching. The recruitment of new permanent staff is reducing the need to employ temporary teachers.

Training which you have provided is enabling new staff to understand and apply agreed teaching policies. More-able pupils now have wider opportunities to tackle a range of thought-provoking problems. Each year group is learning aspects of the curriculum using a common topic which has been decided in consultation with pupils. The leader of mathematics has helped teachers extend the range of opportunities for

pupils to use and apply their subject skills. Younger pupils are provided with opportunities to develop their literacy skills in all areas of the classroom. Teachers of older pupils are providing them with meaningful contexts for writing. You have worked with an effective specialist school for pupils with disabilities related to autism. This has enabled you to check that the assessments you make of your own pupils with similar needs are accurate.

Governors are about to complete their external review and have identified what they wish to gain from this with precision. They convey a passion for their duties and talk of a climate in which everyone is comfortable with lively debate. They now obtain more information to help them challenge and support the school from first-hand experience. For instance they have recently witnessed moderation of Year 6 writing assessments. A staff governor and the headteacher have worked together to help inspect another school within the academy chain.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

### **External support**

The executive principal from the sponsor academy chain is providing effective support as you tackle the key issues for improvement. For example she has helped senior leaders turn ideas for improvement into an effective plan. The academy chain is providing a wide range of training for leaders and teaching staff. It has also organised an exchange of teaching expertise between your school and another for which it is responsible. The sponsor intends to introduce a centralised pupil tracking programme this term with the aim of holding school leaders and governors even more closely to account.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Waltham Forest and the Academies Advisors Unit at the Department for Education.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Wright  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**