

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



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Mrs Awen Simpson
Headteacher
Woodside CofE Controlled Primary School
Maypole Lane
Grendon
Atherstone
Warwickshire
CV9 2BS

Dear Mrs Simpson

Short inspection of Woodside CofE Controlled Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 9 February 2016, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in March 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. It is to the credit of you and your colleagues, including governors, that you have done so while managing significant changes. The school is now part of Heartwood Church of England Academy Trust. You have ensured that the school's unique character and core values are maintained and that the school's drive for improvement is strengthened. Governors have restructured their committees to ensure clear lines of accountability. This has resulted in further rigour in their challenge and support for the school.

You aim to inspire every child to have a love of learning and to respect and value others. You and the staff place this at the heart of everything you do. Pupils with additional needs are included in every aspect of school life. You focus closely on removing any barriers which may hinder pupils' success. Parents particularly value this. Comments include 'Every child is valued here regardless of their abilities and needs.'

At the last inspection, inspectors identified a need to increase the proportion of teaching that is outstanding. You relentlessly pursue this goal. Your checks on teaching are very thorough. They include regular visits to classrooms, achievement meetings with teachers, reviews of pupils' work and discussions with pupils about their learning. Leaders provide precise and useful advice to teachers about what to

do to further improve their teaching. Teachers appreciate this. They are reflective about their own teaching and are committed to improvement.

You carefully organise professional development opportunities to meet teachers' needs and the school's priorities. You have established effective partnerships between staff within the school and across the academy trust. Leaders provide individual support for teachers where necessary. For example, some teachers attend professional development courses provided by the local teaching school while others have bespoke programmes of support. Your records show continued improvements to the quality of teaching.

Leaders are not complacent. External tests and the school's own records show that, although standards compare well with other schools locally and nationally, pupils' achievement is not consistent across subjects and classes. You and governors are fully aware of this. Improvement plans focus on the areas where improvement is most needed. You recognise that there is a need to add clear criteria to some of the subject leaders' improvement plans so that leaders can measure the extent to which, and how quickly, actions are helping the school to meet key priorities.

Your actions to address weaknesses in the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters represent) have been swift. Your records show that the changes you have made are having a positive impact and that more pupils are reaching the expected standards. This continues to be a key priority. Leaders, including governors, carefully monitor the care and support given to disadvantaged pupils. These pupils have individual plans with additional help carefully tailored to their needs. Their progress and well-being are checked diligently. Your records show that these pupils are making good progress from their different starting points.

The curriculum is engaging and offers many opportunities for pupils to visit local places of interest such as Tamworth Castle. Teachers provide interesting and meaningful reasons for pupils to write across different subjects. During the inspection, pupils were writing explanations linked to a history topic on Pompeii. They were extending their vocabulary and eager to explain to me that 'Pliny returned to Pompeii to find his friend but was overcome by the toxic fumes and debris and he didn't manage to survive.' Other pupils have written accounts of the astronaut Tim Peake's arrival at the International Space Station. Pupils develop a love of learning and make good progress as a result of these activities.

Safeguarding is effective.

Pupils' safety is at the heart of the school. Displays in corridors and classrooms help to create a culture of vigilance in keeping children safe. Well-planned lessons provide meaningful opportunities for pupils to consider risk, including e-safety. As a result, pupils are very aware of how to keep themselves safe. They say that they each have a 'network of trust – that means that we all have at least five grown-ups who we can go to if we ever feel a bit worried or even just a bit uneasy'.

Governors join other governors from trust schools to attend safeguarding training. They say that this 'raises our awareness and gives us an opportunity to talk to other governors and share knowledge and experience'. The leadership team ensures that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose, and records are detailed and of high quality. Records show that necessary actions are taken swiftly and are carefully monitored.

Appropriate checks are carried out on all staff, governors and volunteers. Comprehensive risk assessments have been conducted. All policies reflect the most recent national guidance. Leaders have a clear view of their duties and have recently attended training about keeping pupils safe from radicalisation and extremism.

Inspection findings

- Leaders, including governors, have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further development. The school improvement plans focus on appropriate priorities.
- You rightly continue to focus on improving pupils' writing, particularly boys' writing. External tests and your records show that, in some classes, boys are making rapid progress in writing. You recognise that this is not consistent across the school and you are tackling this effectively.
- Subject leaders continue to work closely with other subject leaders in the academy trust to ensure that teachers are confident and accurate in their assessments of pupils' work. Your records show that clear expectations for pupils' progress have been shared and established across the schools.
- You have introduced a marking policy and regular routines to support teachers' use of assessment and pupils' learning. Many pupils value the system and say that it helps them to improve their work. However, you recognise that the school's policy is not consistently used in all classes.
- The early years leader has identified correct priorities for improvement in the provision, such as working to further improve children's physical development so that they can handle equipment effectively. She is taking effective action to address the priorities. Partnership working across the trust schools has helped staff to become more confident and accurate at recognising what children already know and can do when they join the Reception Year.
- You recognise that some children, especially boys, need additional support with speaking, listening and writing when they join Reception. You have taken effective action to change provision in the early years to address this. You have also organised training for staff and opportunities for them to learn from speech and language experts. As a result, your records show

that more children are making good progress in speaking, listening and writing skills and are better prepared for Year 1.

- At the last inspection, inspectors identified a need for teachers to take every opportunity to show and discuss examples of good writing. The attractive displays in corridors and classrooms, the opportunities for pupils to take part in writing competitions and the focus on writing across all subjects show that, as a school, you have clearly acted on this.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- all improvement plans have clear criteria so that leaders can measure the extent to which the school's priorities have been achieved
- there is consistency in the way that teachers use the school's marking policy.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Education for the Diocese of Birmingham, the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for Warwickshire County Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Marilyn Mottram
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, senior leaders, teachers and three governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body. You accompanied me on visits to all classes. I spoke to pupils in classrooms and around the school and met with a group of pupils. I examined and discussed a range of documentation including samples of pupils' work, information about pupils' achievement, the school's improvement plans and safeguarding checks, policies and procedures. We discussed your own evaluation of the school's effectiveness. I considered the views of 34 parents who wrote to me during the inspection and 37 parents who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. I spoke to parents and carers at the end of the school day.