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14 September 2015

Mr Roger Legate OBE  
Linden Lodge School  
61 Princes Way  
Wimbledon Park  
London,  
SW19 6JB

Dear Mr Legate

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Linden Lodge School**

Following my visit to your school on 14 September 2015, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection 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 February 2015. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. *At its previous section 5 inspection the school was also judged to require improvement.*

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

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with you, senior and middle leaders, members of the governing body, and representatives of the local authority. The purpose of these meetings was to discuss the action and progress taken since the last inspection. Short visits were made to classes during a tour of the school. I evaluated the school's action plans and scrutinised a range of documents. These included information on the progress of pupils, the minutes of meetings and the single central record. I spoke with two parents by telephone.

## **Context**

Since the last inspection the school has made a number of appointments, including one Vice Principal and a staff member responsible as lead practitioner (clinical lead) for co-ordinating Paediatric nursing within the school.

In the course of my visit I was made aware of a safeguarding concern, which remains an ongoing case. While I did not investigate the specifics of this case, I did look at the school's policies and procedures, to check whether safeguarding is effective.

## **Main findings**

The school has introduced improved systems for risk assessing and holding staff to account. The single central record meets requirements. It contains the necessary information for recording staff details and safeguarding information. The school performs the appropriate checks when appointing staff. There is a robust approach to the recruitment of new staff. For example, job advertisements include a statement to confirm that all successful candidates undergo Disclosure and Barring Service checks.

Effective monitoring is in place for safeguarding. There is a centralised file for staff record keeping and information on the safety of pupils.

The school's plans address the areas for improvement. You have developed monitoring systems and accountability across the school. This has extended to the work of the governing body. Action has been taken to address teachers who have been inconsistent in their practice. You have reviewed and evaluated the provision of medication for pupils. Consequently, the storage of medicine has improved substantially since the last inspection. There are now locked cabinets installed in all classrooms.

Middle leaders are now working to share effective practice and support the quality of teaching. Action to check the accuracy of the information used by teachers to monitor pupils has been undertaken. This has involved working closely with other schools in the local authority to test the robustness of systems to track the progress of pupils. To date there are two assessment systems running concurrently. These are being refined.

Teachers have completed a project to review and evaluate the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) within the school. This has involved using consistent intervention strategies to support teaching communication skills and phonics. Middle leaders have shared good practice across their curricular areas. Staff training to

identify communication strategies has been provided. This has had a positive impact on the progress of pupils.

You have taken action to improve the morale of staff. There have been additional facilities developed to support staff well-being and accredited training to improve staff confidence when dealing with the medical needs of pupils. Leaders have signed up to a programme that audits staff development. However, the impact of this has yet to be seen.

Minutes of meetings show that the strength of governors' challenge to senior leaders has improved since the last inspection. The governing body is now undertaking routine checks on safeguarding procedures. Through your support school and the local authority, members of the governing body have been trained to help them monitor pupils' progress and safeguarding. The governing body is fully involved in the strategic direction of the school and to undertake statutory duties more effectively. Governor responsibilities are defined. There is a termly governor work plan in place. This plan includes forming a 'safeguarding and clinical governance committee' to focus on more effective and clearer practice between health, residential and day care. The recent appointment of a lead practitioner (clinical lead) will support this initiative.

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

You are clear on the challenge ahead and recognise that the school is on the journey of improvement.

### **External support**

The local authority has taken effective action to support and challenge the school. The range of support has been focused on the areas the school needs to address following the last inspection. Accountability has been established at leadership level and external support has brought experience to the school. This has improved systems for staff recruitment and strengthened the monitoring of the school. Further engagement in this support is necessary to ensure that your drive for improvement is sustained.

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

Yours sincerely

John Lambern  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**