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21 November 2018

Mr David Whitehead  
Headteacher  
Woolley Wood School  
Chaucer Road  
Sheffield  
South Yorkshire  
S5 9QN

Dear Mr Whitehead

### **Short inspection of Woolley Wood School**

Following my visit to the school on 14 November 2018 with Fiona Dixon, Ofsted Inspector, 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 2015.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

You lead the school with determination and dedication. Pupils enjoy coming to school every day. They appreciate the wide range of activities and opportunities that you offer them. Staff support you well. They enjoy working at the school and value the many positive changes that have taken place since the last inspection.

With the support of your leadership team, your vision and ethos are clearly established. As a result, you have strong, positive relationships with pupils and their parents. Pupils are happy and feel well cared for. Parents agree that you have a nurturing and holistic school that meets the needs of their children well. Parents feel that the staff provide a high level of support for them. One parent explained: 'In the time that my son has been at school, he has shown progress, has settled in remarkably and enjoys coming to school. I feel very lucky that he goes to this school.' Another stated: 'They support us as a family amazingly,' and 'their tireless dedication, positivity and expertise means that all the children are supported.' Parents have many opportunities to take part in activities at school. These include stay and play sessions, religious education and craft activities.

You have made extensive improvements to enhance the provision for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD). Staff are now well trained and confident in using a range of therapeutic approaches. Pupils who have PMLD are making good levels of progress appropriate for their individual needs.

You provide staff with targeted training which considers the many different needs of the pupils. Staff are loyal to the school and the pupils. They care for the pupils as if they were 'our own children' and state that pupils deserve 'care, respect and our time'. Staff celebrate success. They positively engage with pupils, allowing a strong development of trust. Staff feel highly supported by the senior leadership team.

The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is excellent. Pupils are proud of their school and are very welcoming to visitors. They understand the need for rules, and they are happy to follow the school's 'Golden Rules'. Pupils understand how to be kind to others. Pupils who do not take part in lunchtime activities for medical reasons attend 'Shine Time'. This session promotes a highly nurturing and sensory experience, including massage and gentle movement. Staff are highly sensitive to the needs of pupils.

You have taken positive steps toward achieving the areas for improvement identified in the last inspection report. You are aware that there are still improvements to be made in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. You produce a significant amount of data for analysis. You now understand that this needs fine tuning to ensure that you only generate high-quality and meaningful data which will impact positively on school improvement.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. You and your staff have created a positive culture of safeguarding. Staff members are well trained and understand their responsibilities to keep children safe. They are fully aware of the procedures that they must follow should they have any cause for concern.

You have put many measures in place to keep pupils safe. These include lessons which specifically address how to keep safe, both in and out of school. Arrangements for pupils arriving at school are thorough. Well-controlled routines are in place to make sure that pupils can exit and enter transport safely and in an orderly manner.

Pupils feel safe and well cared for at school. Parents are confident that their children are safe at school. One parent, reflecting the views of many, stated: 'My son is well cared for and happy.'

You follow up any pupil absence diligently and do all you can to assure yourself that pupils are safe. You have a very clear grasp about the circumstances which prevent some pupils from attending regularly. Some systems are in place to support parents and pupils with this. For example, a large number of health professionals and therapeutic practitioners now work with pupils at school.

The behaviour of pupils is exemplary. They are polite, respectful and courteous. There are no incidents of bullying, discriminatory or prejudicial behaviour. If

incidents of this type were to occur, there are clear plans in place to deal with them rapidly.

## **Inspection findings**

- Pupils make substantial progress in their communication and personal skills. A wide range of highly specialised resources are available for them to use. Staff are highly skilled in using the resources effectively to promote rapid progress.
- A great deal of planning and thought is put into making sure that pupils are looked after very well and are deeply cared for. Opportunities for pupils to develop are wide. They take part in many activities that broaden their experiences, for example through cultural visits, outdoor learning, horse riding and swimming.
- Pupils are positively encouraged to increase their independence skills where possible. This happens throughout school, particularly at lunchtime in the dining room. Staff support pupils well and encourage them in their choices. Some pupils can clear away when they have finished, while others need support by staff to complete small stages of the task.
- Each pupil has an individual pupil plan. These contain their short-term targets, which teachers base around the long-term targets on their education, health and care plans. These targets are not always specific enough to enable the recording of very small steps of progress. Staff do not monitor pupils' progress frequently enough. Consequently, pupils' progress data is not always as accurate as it could be.
- Continuous provision used in classes other than the early years is not well developed. Staff do not always use these opportunities to specifically target pupils' academic progress. This inhibits the progress that some pupils can make.
- Children in the early years make strong progress in both communication and language development and in their academic progress. Staff plan their continuous provision well. They set small, realistic targets for pupils. The activities which staff provide enable the children to work towards and achieve their targets. Staff support the children very well. Children in the early years are happy and content.
- Teachers create well-planned opportunities for pupils to use the rebound room, sensory room and soft play areas. These activities effectively enable pupils to build on specific physical areas for development. Staff closely link activities to specific areas of the curriculum. This means that pupils can develop a deeper understanding of some themes.
- You have developed your middle leadership team well. This team is now a strength of the school. As a result, your capacity for further improvement is strong.
- Governors are enthusiastic supporters of the school. They provide challenge in meetings and can ask a variety of questions to find the additional information they need. Governors spend a great deal of time at school and, consequently,

understand the day-to-day characteristics of Woolley Wood School.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- staff identify accurate individual targets and closely monitor them to provide a true picture of pupils' progress
- teachers have a sharper focus on the outcomes that they require from continuous provision in key stage 1 and key stage 2.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Sheffield. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Sara Roe  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, the inspectors discussed the work of the school with you, the deputy headteacher, the safeguarding team, the lead for special educational needs and middle leaders. Inspectors also talked to three members of the governing body, including the chair. We closely examined the information about pupils' progress and analysed pupils' learning in their workbooks and learning journals. The inspection team checked a range of documentation, including leaders' evaluation of the school's effectiveness, external evaluations of aspects of the school's work and minutes of meetings of the management committee. I considered seven written responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Parent View. The team visited all classes to observe teaching, learning and assessment. They were accompanied by you, your deputy headteacher or your assistant headteacher. A formal discussion was held with seven pupils. Both inspectors talked more informally to pupils in lessons and around school.