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13 September 2022

Mathew Atkinson  
Acting Executive Headteacher  
Woodfield Primary School  
Woodfield Road  
Harrogate  
North Yorkshire  
HG1 4HZ

Dear Mr Atkinson

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Woodfield Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 5 July 2022, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions that have been taken since the school's previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the third monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection that took place in January 2020. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

This was the third routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. I discussed the ongoing impact of the pandemic with you and have taken that into account in my evaluation.

Having considered the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time:

**The school continues to be inadequate. Leaders and those responsible for governance are taking effective action towards the removal of special measures.**

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

Yours sincerely

Tim Scargill-Knight  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Report on the third monitoring inspection on 5 July 2022**

### **Context**

Since the monitoring inspection in November 2021, the previous acting head of school has left. A new head of school took up the post in January 2022. The school's special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) now works part time. One teacher has left the school and a new temporary teacher took up the post in April 2022. The number of pupils on roll at the school continues to decline.

The proposed technical closure of the school and merger with a local school, planned for August 2022, is not going ahead. The local authority is undertaking a consultation with a proposal to close the school on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022.

### **The progress made towards the removal of special measures**

Leaders have identified the main areas they are working to improve in a detailed development plan. This plan gives staff and governors a clear and shared pathway to secure improvement. Leaders have secured further improvements to various aspects of the school, including the curriculum, pupils' behaviour and attendance. Pupils have also been provided with opportunities to learn about life in modern Britain. Governors are increasingly involved in monitoring the impact of leaders' actions to improve the quality of education. However, the school has very limited capacity to improve without external support from the current temporary leaders.

Subject leaders have worked with a specialist leader of education to strengthen the curriculum for some subjects, such as science and design technology (DT). Leaders have mapped out the curriculum to ensure that it matches the scope of the national curriculum. They have identified key vocabulary that pupils should learn over time. Staff are now teaching this new curriculum. They start lessons with a check of what pupils already know. Because of historic weaknesses in the curriculum, pupils have gaps in their prior knowledge and so struggle to access some of the age-appropriate content in leaders' new plans. Teachers adapt the new curriculum to take into account these gaps in pupils' knowledge.

Despite the improvements to the planned curriculum, some teachers do not plan lessons that emphasise the important knowledge that pupils should learn. As a result, some pupils still do not learn and remember the knowledge they should in some wider curriculum subjects. Leaders have plans to address this by providing further training to enhance teachers' subject knowledge.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. The SENCo works with teaching staff to ensure that they are clear on how pupils should be helped in lessons. Staff have had training from external specialists to help them to meet the needs of some pupils with SEND. Bespoke support, such as for reading, ensures that

these pupils get the help they need. As a result, these pupils are achieving increasingly well.

Leaders are taking effective steps to improve pupils' behaviour. Pupils now behave well in lessons. They are encouraged to show respect towards adults and each other. Pupils are rewarded with 'respect' points for actions such as using good manners and holding doors open for each other. However, pupils do not demonstrate consistently positive attitudes to learning. They show little enthusiasm for what they are taught in subjects like science and religious education (RE), where the curriculum does not hold their interest.

Leaders have recognised that some pupils struggle to articulate their learning. Recently, leaders have begun to train staff to develop pupils' oracy skills. Pupils are now receiving help to structure what they want to say. Pupils are increasingly encouraged to debate topics.

Rates of attendance have improved. Pupils now attend school well. Leaders work effectively with families to encourage good attendance at school. Few pupils are persistently absent.

As COVID-19 restrictions have lifted, leaders have introduced visits to help pupils understand more about life in modern Britain. Pupils in key stage 2 recently visited a mosque to support their learning about Islam. Regular assemblies supplement the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum and help pupils to develop an understanding of what makes people different. A recent diversity week has helped pupils to understand more about different family relationships in modern Britain. The effectiveness of the governing body has continued to improve. Governors now undertake visits to the school to consider the impact of specific pieces of work to improve the quality of education. For example, the chair of the governing body undertook a joint visit with a local authority adviser to see first-hand the implementation of leaders' strengthened curriculum plans for science. When governors visit, they write detailed reports for the full governing body. This enables all governors to evaluate the work that leaders are doing to improve the school. Governors now ask probing questions and hold temporary leaders to account for their actions to improve the school. Governors have undertaken this work while providing strategic leadership in relation to the future of the school, which remains uncertain.

All staff are proud to work in the school. Temporary leaders are considerate of their well-being. Staff appreciate the professional development opportunities available to them. Recent work to strengthen the curriculum is helping to reduce their workload.

### **Additional support**

A specialist leader of education from a local teaching school has worked with subject leaders and teachers to strengthen curriculum plans for some subjects. Staff have had some training to help them to use these plans to design sequences of lessons. A local authority adviser has worked with governors to create a detailed action plan to guide their

work. The local authority has carried out visits to check the quality of the curriculum for science and evaluate the work of the school to safeguard pupils. The local authority reports its findings to the governing body, which uses this information to challenge school leaders.

## **Evidence**

The inspector met with the acting executive headteacher, the acting head of school, the school's SENCo and members of staff. The inspector met with two members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. The inspector considered the responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and reviewed the responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for staff.

The inspector reviewed curriculum plans for science, RE, DT, art and PSHE. The inspector also visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and spoke to groups of pupils. The inspector reviewed documents, including the school development plan, minutes of governing body meetings, records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding and plans for support for pupils with SEND.