

15 July 2009

Mr Chris Lloyd
Headteacher
Wolverdene Special School
22 Love Lane
Andover
SP10 2AF

Dear Mr Lloyd

Ofsted monitoring of schools with a notice to improve

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school with Mrs Clare Davies, Social Care Inspector, on 7 and 8 July 2009, and for the time you gave to our telephone discussion and for the information which you provided before and during our visit. I am also grateful to the governors who came in to discuss the school's work and to the pupils who spoke to us.

As a result of the inspection on 21 October 2008, the school was asked to:

- ensure that the school complies fully with current government requirements for safeguarding and that all recruitment procedures are in accordance with the national minimum standards (NMS 27)
- ensure that whole-school management systems promote the health, safety and well-being of all children
- sharpen the analysis and use of academic data to inform future planning.

Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making satisfactory progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising pupils' achievement.

Pupils' standards are low, particularly in writing. However, pupils make at least satisfactory, and sometimes good, progress, given their attainment on entry to the school. Many recognise that they need to learn to manage their behaviour better and to improve their social skills. Pupils particularly appreciate the 'merit' system and the way they can earn rewards in recognition of their effort and achievements.

The school now complies with current government requirements for safeguarding, and recruitment procedures are in accordance with the national minimum standards. It makes appropriate checks to ensure staff are suitable to work with children and keeps the information in a single central record, as required. The designated person for child protection has received recent training. All school staff have been issued with the school's child protection policies and procedures, which is being followed up with additional training in September 2009. The school has made good progress in



addressing the recommendations made following the last social care inspection in May 2009.

Management systems to promote the health, safety and well-being of children who are in the residential provision are good. However, there are still weaknesses with regard to procedures for the management of pupils' behaviour in the school. Incidents that lead to the withdrawal of pupils from class are not always recorded in the appropriate manner. While senior leaders are beginning to monitor behavioural incidents more closely, analysis does not yet make a sufficient link between the causes and the consequences of inappropriate behaviour. A sub-group of governors has been established to oversee safeguarding arrangements across the school, which includes reviewing the use of current behaviour management strategies. It has received information on the frequency of behavioural incidents and agreed areas for future action. The local authority is providing a satisfactory level of support which includes training on safeguarding and approaches to behaviour management.

Senior leaders are able to check the academic progress of pupils, using information provided by twice-yearly assessments. Data are being used to compare pupils' progress with that made by pupils in similar schools, and to measure the school's performance against that of previous years. It is also being used to identify weaker areas and to introduce new strategies to tackle them. For example, a new approach to literacy has been introduced, which is linked to the development of pupils' language. The use of data to set challenging targets is developing as the school forms a more accurate picture of the progress pupils can be expected to make. Assessment information is not used consistently to inform teachers' planning or to mark pupils' work, in order to ensure that tasks build on pupils' existing skills.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Redpath
Her Majesty's Inspector