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30 November 2009

Mr M Millar
Headteacher
Woodlands Community Primary School
Heathgate
Birch Green
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WN8 6QH

Dear Mr Millar

Ofsted subject survey: good practice in literacy

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, during my recent visit on 19 October 2009 to look at work in literacy.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our national evaluation and reporting. Published reports are likely to list the names of the contributing institutions but individual institutions will not be identified in the main text without their consent. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of each half term.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included: discussions with you, your deputy and the literacy leader; observations of four lessons; a meeting with a group of pupils; and examination of the records of a small group of pupils.

Features of good practice observed

- Very generous staffing levels allow excellent pastoral care and support for all pupils and especially for those most at risk of not reaching national average standards in literacy. The school has very effectively identified the barriers which hold pupils back and is doing everything possible to remove those barriers.
- Outstanding leadership and management are focused on ensuring that pupils attain at least national average standards in literacy.
- High-quality teaching ensures that pupils acquire reading and writing skills systematically including: the use of phonics; regular reading opportunities and, for some pupils, being heard reading by adults; and working through a banded reading scheme.
- The use of boy-friendly texts and audiovisual equipment along with reward systems such as raffle tickets and prizes engages boys effectively.

Areas for development

- Consider expanding teachers' knowledge of children's developmental acquisition of parts of speech to enable them to fill in the gaps in pupils' knowledge more effectively and more rapidly.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop literacy learning in the school.

As I explained previously, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and will be published on the Ofsted website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Angela M Westington
Her Majesty's Inspector