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Mr Graham Gibson
Headteacher
Woodhill Primary School
Woodhill
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Dear Mr Gibson

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Woodhill Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 10 March 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please also thank the pupils for their helpfulness and their readiness to talk to me about their work, particularly those pupils whom I interviewed.

Since the last inspection, there has been little change in the profile of the pupil population. However, there has been a considerable turnover of staff. Seven new teachers have been appointed during this academic year, including the literacy leader and the Early Years Foundation Stage leader. Two out of the four members of the senior leadership team have come to the school since the last inspection, and the deputy headteacher is currently absent.

As a result of the inspection on 12 May 2009, the school was asked to address the most important areas for improvement which are set out in the annex to this letter.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school has made:

satisfactory progress in making improvements.

and

satisfactory progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Pupils' attainment has begun to improve since the last inspection in English, mathematics and science. Results in the end of key stage assessments rose in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 in 2009 and the improvement was sustained in 2010. The school's tracking data and the work in pupils' books indicate that pupils' attainment in English and mathematics is close to the national average this year in Year 2 and Year 6, thanks to the accelerated progress that pupils have made in these year groups. Pupils in Year 5 are working at levels close to national expectations for their age. However, a lesser proportion of pupils are close to national expectations in Year 1 and Year 4, and the proportion is low in Year 3. Pupils' progress is good in Year 2 and Year 6, and broadly satisfactory across the rest of the school, so that pupils' overall achievement is broadly satisfactory.

The school's own view of the quality of teaching is borne out by the lesson observations and learning walks carried out during the visit. In Year 2 and Year 6, teaching is securely good, often with elements of exceptional practice. A lively pace, plenty of challenge, targeted questioning and carefully planned differentiation are key features of the best teaching. Assessment is used well to match work to pupils' needs. Less able pupils and those of average ability are well supported, while more able pupils have the chance to work at a higher level and make rapid progress. Good teaching was also observed in Year 5. Elsewhere in the school, teaching is broadly satisfactory. Teachers make good use of resources, particularly new technology, to add interest to lessons, and they manage pupils' behaviour well. However, pace is sometimes too slow to accelerate pupils' progress enough, and teachers do not always ensure that pupils are concentrating on their learning, through targeted questioning or sharply focused tasks effectively matched to their needs.

The energy and commitment of the headteacher have played a pivotal role in moving the school forward since the last inspection. He has introduced highly structured systems and procedures for monitoring the work of the school and tracking the performance of pupils. As a result, senior staff have a clearer and more realistic picture of what is happening in class and how much progress pupils are making. Assessment is now more reliable, and teachers are becoming more confident in using this to match work to the needs of their classes. Pupil progress meetings are being used to establish teachers' accountability for how well their pupils are doing. Leadership responsibilities are well distributed, and senior and middle leaders have a strong sense of teamwork and drive towards a shared goal. However, the impact of their work is not yet fully apparent, as several have been in post for a short while only, and some have limited time allocated at present for carrying out their leadership roles. The local authority is supporting the school effectively in its improvement work.

The school had identified serious concerns with provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage since the last inspection. However, these concerns have now been successfully addressed. The Nursery and Reception classes offer children a good

range of activities covering all areas of learning indoors and outside. Adult support for the children is good, and as a result the children are happy, secure and settled.

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

Yours sincerely

Jane Chesterfield
Additional Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in May 2009:

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science at all key stages
- Improve teaching by using assessment information to match work more closely to the needs of pupils, providing appropriate challenge and involvement
- Ensure leaders at all levels have an impact on increasing the pace of improvement.