

Serco Education and  
Children's Services  
Boundary House  
2 Wythall Green Way  
Middle Lane  
Birmingham  
West Midlands  
B47 6LW

T 08456 40 40 40  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

Direct T 0121 683 2048  
Victoria.mortimore2@serco.com



16 December 2009

Jane Woods  
Woodlands Primary School  
Alban Crescent  
Borehamwood  
Hertfordshire  
WD6 5JF

Dear Mrs Woods

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 15 December 2009, and for all the information which you provided before and during my visit. Please also pass on my thanks to all the pupils for their help during the inspection and your Chair and Vice Chair of Governors for taking time to meet with me to discuss their view of the school's progress since the last inspection. It was an especially busy time with the Christmas activities in school including the music assembly which many parents attended.

Woodlands will be reverting to a one form entry primary school in September 2010. Since the last inspection the school has experienced a period of senior staff disruptions. The previous headteacher has left following a period of ill health. The deputy headteacher has now returned from secondment to the University of Hertfordshire. The acting deputy headteacher, who led the school for part of the last academic year, is still in post to support the new headteacher who was appointed in September 2009. The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and those for whom English is an additional language is increasing. The school also experiences an increased level of mobility with more pupils leaving and joining the school in different year groups.

As a result of the inspection on 11-12 September 2008, the school was asked to: comply fully with statutory requirements for safeguarding and protecting pupils; improve achievement by ensuring pupils make consistent progress as they move through the school; ensure that all pupils know what they need to do to improve their work; and, regularly and rigorously evaluate agreed actions to raise standards and improve the quality of education provided.



Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making good progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the pupil's achievement. The school is also demonstrating a good capacity for sustained improvement.

The school has moved on well since the last inspection and staff are working as a united team with the new headteacher to bring about further improvements. The introduction of setting pupils by ability in mathematics, and more recently in English, is helping to improve the progress pupils make in Years 5 and 6. In Years 1 and 2 the raised awareness of phonics is helping to improve both reading and writing skills. Throughout the school the emphasis on improving spelling and punctuation and the encouragement to extend writing skills is also beginning to have an impact on improving pupils' progress in English, especially their writing. There is accelerated progress evident in mathematics and science in Years 5 and 6 as confirmed in the 2009 national tests. Progress in English still lags behind although the school's careful tracking and the evidence in pupils books indicates there here, too, progress is gradually improving. Pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points as a result of careful assessment of their needs and the good support they receive in class and in group work. Teaching assistants are well deployed and work in good partnership with teachers.

There has been rapid improvement in the progress tracking and careful data analysis is undertaken to include detailed scrutiny and evaluation of the performance for each classes and for groups of pupils. Careful analysis of the tests taken by pupils in the summer term has identified weaker aspects of vocabulary, spelling and punctuation which are now a focus for improvement in literacy. Good use is made of the Raise-on-line and Fisher Family Trust reports to compare school and national performance. The school are using to full advantage the advice obtained from local authority staff to help raise attainment in English and mathematics further. The same rigorous approach to the evaluation of attainment data and the monitoring of initiatives to raise attainment is being given to other areas of the schools work. A programme for monitoring is prepared each half term by the headteacher and shared with all staff. Members of the senior leadership team play an active role in working with the headteacher to ensure that all areas of the work of the school are carefully monitored and evaluated, weakness identified and targeted for improvement.

All staff are committed to raising pupil's achievement. Pupils know what their teachers expect because there are clear learning objectives set for each lesson and success criteria which teachers and pupils review to assess the success of the lesson. Pupils show a good attitude to learning, behave well and want to do their best. Several parts of lessons were observed during the inspection and in all cases the pace of learning was never less than satisfactory. Where it was better work was well matched to pupils' ability so they made better progress. As a result of careful tracking, teachers are clear about how much progress pupils are making. What is less consistent is the use that teachers make of the information to plan tasks that

appropriately challenge all groups, especially those of higher ability, to improve their progress. The school's marking policy, introduced to give clear guidance to pupils on what they do well and what they need to improve in their work, is becoming embedded in the school but is still inconsistent. Close monitoring of lessons by the headteacher and senior leaders identifies such inconsistencies and the school acknowledges that further improvements are still required in these areas.

The Headteacher has brought a fresh and highly structured approach to the work of the school which has encouraged staff and refreshed the senior leadership team. They share a determination to drive the school forward and improve achievement for all pupils. Senior leaders are clear in their roles and responsibilities. Leadership of each key stage and the core subjects is efficient and priorities for improvement are carefully identified and there is a drive to ensure consistent progress through each key stage. The improvement planning has improved based on the rigorous monitoring programme carried out by senior leaders. Governors are fully involved in the all aspects of strategic planning, are knowledgeable, supportive and challenging in equal measure. Swift action by governors has ensured that all aspects of safeguarding and the protection of pupils are well managed. They play a full part in evaluating the actions to help bring about an improvement in the quality of education and raising standards for pupils.

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

Norma Ball

Additional Inspector