

## PROTECT-INSPECTION

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22 June 2012

Mr Pilkington  
Headteacher  
Cross Lane Primary and Nursery School  
Cross Lane  
Elland  
West Yorkshire  
HX5 0LP

Dear Mr Pilkington

### **Notice to improve: monitoring inspection of Cross Lane Primary and Nursery School**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 21 June 2012 and for the information which you provided during the inspection. Please convey my thanks to the Chair of Governors and the representative of the local authority, who gave up their time to meet with or talk to me, as well as to the pupils.

As a result of the inspection on 8 December 2011, 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 is making satisfactory progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the pupils' achievement.

The school's data indicate that the pupils' achievement is improving, particularly in Years 1 to 5 and in mathematics, although achievement in that subject still lags noticeably behind English. In the lessons observed, the pupils were generally making satisfactory progress. The teachers are giving much more attention to developing the pupils' skills in mathematical calculation and the pupils' understanding is increasing accordingly. Some of the teachers' planning makes very explicit the mathematical vocabulary and concepts to be covered within lessons, but the extent to which this is done varies. As a result, some pupils struggled to understand basic concepts when discussing them with the inspector. Attendance has improved by about two percentage points and was above average at the time of this inspection. This is the result of more-determined actions, including some to reduce the number of holidays taken during term time. The school can point to individual examples of significantly improved attendance rates resulting from well-coordinated work with external agencies.

The evidence shows that the quality of teaching continues to improve. Examples of inadequate teaching have been tackled and the school's records show an increasing proportion that is good, though very little that is outstanding. In the examples of teaching observed during this inspection, there was clear evidence of the teachers checking the

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progress of the pupils during lessons, although the skill and effectiveness with which it was done varied. There were few examples of lessons being adapted or activities being revised to take account of what was learned about the pupils' progress. Generally, the pupils are aware of the levels they have reached and their targets. Often, they can state how much progress they have made from one assessment to another. Many can talk with some precision about what they need to do next to improve, but are often less clear about what they do well.

Practice in the marking of the pupils' work is much more consistent throughout the school. It is generally supportive and offers guidance about how the pupils can improve their work. It does not, however, always identify clearly what specifically has been done well. The quality of marking is noticeably better for English than for other subjects, including mathematics.

The pupils express clear views that the quality of lessons is improving. They say lessons are now much more active, with less time given to teachers talking, so that they are able to spend more time concentrating on the tasks they have been set. This they do well, generally, and the lessons observed by the inspector were purposeful and productive as a result. The inspector found a little evidence of teaching that provides the pupils with opportunities to explore their own ideas, but such practice is not widespread and the teachers' approaches to questioning the pupils are not facilitating it. The questions did not invite comments or promote discussion sufficiently.

Scrutiny of the pupils' books and work folders indicated that the pupils are producing a broader range of work than previously and the amount in their books and folders has increased. That includes the range of opportunities for the pupils to write, including some extended pieces of writing. The quality of the teachers' planning is now broadly consistent and emphasises what will be learned, but the level of detail concerning provision for different groups of pupils, in order to meet the full range of needs, varies and sometimes fails to make clear how assessment has been used to determine the activities. The more-able pupils appreciate the increased amount of time they are given to work independently. However, they indicate that the teachers do not always get the balance right between leaving them to get on and providing guidance on how well they are doing or responding if the tasks need to be altered, either to increase the level of challenge, or provide needed support. Generally, the teaching focuses well on developing the pupils' skills for writing imaginatively, for example, by working on their descriptive language.

Good progress has been made in developing the quality of leadership and management. The use of data tracking the pupils' progress and attainment is now more widespread and focused. Whole-school approaches are much more evident. The analyses undertaken are sharper and more intelligent and are leading to greater success in tackling any underachievement among the pupils, individually and for different groups, such as those eligible for free school meals. The developments have been supported by increasingly well-focused involvement by the governing body and changes to the structures within the school, including the appointment of a substantive deputy headteacher. Monitoring activities are

being carried out much more thoroughly and rigorously. Leaders and managers are accurate in their assessments of the quality of the school's work and understand its current performance well. The members of staff convey a sense of determination and commitment to improve.

The school has responded well to external support. The support has been most effective in bringing about the improvements in leadership and management and in attendance. The local authority's support plan is now fit for purpose. Progress with regard to the area for improvement in mathematics has been hampered, however, by an unavoidable delay in providing the planned support for that area.

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

Mr Clive Moss  
Her Majesty's Inspector

## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in December 2011**

- Improve the quality of teaching so that the good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1 is successfully built on throughout Key Stage 2 by:
  - ensuring that the use of assessment and marking is effectively undertaken to monitor pupils’ learning both in lessons and over time
  - providing constant feedback to all pupils about how well they are doing and the next steps in their learning
  - widening opportunities for pupils to participate in lessons by improving their skills of working independently and exploring their own ideas
  - increasing the volume of pupils’ recorded work so that it more closely reflects their range of learning.
  
- Raise pupils’ achievement in mathematics by:
  - improving the consistency of good and better teaching of mathematics, in all years, especially in lower Key Stage 2, by improving pupils’ understanding of calculation and the use of mathematical vocabulary
  - sharpening the quality of planning so that learning activities meet the needs of all pupils, but particularly of the more able.
  
- Increase the progress pupils make in writing by:
  - promoting more opportunities for pupils to record their writing and apply their skills independently
  - focusing closely on enabling pupils to write imaginatively and to more regularly create extended pieces of work.
  
- Ensure that all leaders and managers across the school drive improvement vigorously by:
  - using information about the achievement of different groups of pupils sooner, and more rigorously, to pinpoint and address underachievement
  - focusing the monitoring of teaching on the impact that it has on all pupils’ learning and progress.
  
- Raise attendance to the national average by working closely with families and outside agencies to reduce the number of holidays taken during term-time.