

CfBT Inspection Services
Suite 22
West Lancs Investment Centre
Maple View
Skelmersdale
WN8 9TG

T 0300 1231231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct T 01695 566 937
Direct F 01695 729320
Direct email:
jsimmons@cfbt.com



12 September 2013

Mrs T Lake
Headteacher
Castleford Wheldon Infant School and Nursery
Francis Street
Castleford
West Yorkshire
WF10 1HF

Dear Mrs Lake

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Castleford Wheldon Infant School and Nursery, Wakefield

Following my visit to your school on 11 September 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on the findings of my visit. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in June. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to strengthen the monitoring of leaders and governors by ensuring:

- monitoring places greater emphasis on the quality and the impact of teaching on pupils' learning
- monitoring activities are linked to criteria in the school improvement plan and are clearly recorded and enables leaders to hold staff to account
- governors' monitoring of the work of leaders and scrutiny of data is recorded and followed up
- increased expectations in writing are embedded throughout the school.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you and the deputy headteacher, members of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school improvement plan was evaluated together with other documents including monitoring activity undertaken since the inspection.

Context

Since the inspection one teacher has left the school and a new teacher has started in Key Stage 1.

Main findings

The improvements noted in the inspection are continuing. The school's ambition to get to good is clear in the vision and drive of senior leaders and the plans they have set out. The new plans contain criteria which demonstrate clear expectations of improvement in teaching and pupils' progress and attainment. There are clear milestones which chart the ambitions of the school to get to 'good' quickly.

Targets for pupils' attainment in reading and mathematics reflect this ambition but leaders acknowledge that targets for writing need to be more challenging. Leaders have analysed pupils' achievement in writing and have a clear plan to improve writing including the targeting of a specific group of pupils.

School leaders are incisive in their evaluation of the quality of teaching and the urgency with which it needs to improve to be good. Teachers have individual action plans to improve the quality of their teaching. The Deputy Headteacher is working alongside teachers to coach and develop effective practice. Monitoring to check the progress of improvements is underway. However, this needs to focus on the quality of teaching and its impact on learning rather than on displays and resourcing.

Governors have developed a clear framework for monitoring the work of the school which includes visits and discussions with leaders. To aid greater accountability, leaders and governors need to ensure that their monitoring is clearly focused on the criteria in their plan and report this clearly to enable robust scrutiny and challenge at all levels.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

Challenge, and subsequent support, from the local authority have led to improvements in governors understanding of their roles and there is a clear plan to check the work of the school. Support has been programmed to address the correct priorities in a considered way. The local authority has supported the development of senior leaders. This has included involvement in its 'securing good' programme and, together with support from the school improvement officer; this has increased capacity in the school. This improved capacity is evident in the improvements brought about during the summer term.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Wakefield and as below.

Yours sincerely

Adrian Guy

Her Majesty's Inspector

The letter should be copied to the following:

- Appropriate authority - Chair of the Governing Body/Interim Executive Board
- Local authority - including where the school is an academy
- Contractor providing support services on behalf of the local authority - where appropriate
- The Education Funding Agency (EFA) if the school has a sixth form
- < Diocese - for voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools
- The person or body responsible for appointing foundation governors if the school has a foundation
- DfE - Academies Advisers Unit [colin.diamond@education.gsi.gov.uk] - for academies