

CfBT Inspection Services  
Suite 22

West Lancs Investment Centre  
Maple View  
Skelmersdale  
WN8 9TG

**T** 0300 123 1231

Text Phone: 0161 6188524 **Direct T** 01695 566 857

enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk **Direct F** 01695 729 320

[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

**Direct email:** jkinsman@cfbt.com

25 October 2013

Mrs Barbara Cunningham  
Executive Headteacher  
Normanton Junior School  
Church Lane  
Normanton  
West Yorkshire  
WF6 1EY

Dear Mrs Cunningham

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Normanton Junior School**

Following my visit to your school on 24 October 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in June 2013.

### **Evidence**

During this inspection I met with you, the Chair of the Interim Executive Board and a representative of the local authority. We visited lessons, spoke with pupils and looked at their work. The local authority's statement of action and the school's action plan were evaluated.

### **Context**

Since the inspection, the headteacher has resigned and the headteacher of the infant school has been appointed temporarily as executive headteacher of both schools, while the local authority decides on the future status of the school. Two members of staff have been seconded from the infant school, one as a lead practitioner for teaching and learning and the other to teach in Year 3. In return,

one teacher from the junior school has been seconded to the infant school. The governing body has been replaced by an Interim Executive Board.

### **The quality of leadership and management at the school**

The executive headteacher has taken prompt action to begin to address the areas for improvement, particularly in relation to teaching and learning, by improving writing and securing the accuracy of assessment information. Early indications of this improvement can be seen in the school's own monitoring records and through visits to lessons with the executive headteacher.

There has been a clear focus on developing the accuracy of teachers' assessments. It has been a key priority to raise teachers' expectations, pitch work at the right level to meet the needs of all pupils and to provide the challenge that is needed to accelerate progress. For instance, clearly written and well-organised assessment guide books are helping teachers to secure assessment and to plan next steps in pupils' learning. This is further supported through professional development activities. Half-termly progress meetings have been built into the monitoring calendar to identify and tackle underachievement sooner rather than later.

The executive headteacher is determined to set ambitious targets based on an accurate baseline. When finalised, the local authority and school will use these to set more realistic, but challenging targets for 2014.

Leaders, supported by the local authority, have gathered an accurate overview of teaching and learning. They intend to use this to focus on supporting and challenging individual teachers to improve their practice, as well as to work on some of the common issues identified.

A number of systems and procedures have been developed to support planned improvements. For instance, the performance management policy and procedures have been overhauled. However, these have yet to be shared and agreed with staff because of delays in training. This means that the school will not meet the 31 October 2013 deadline for completing teacher performance reviews. Review meetings though, will still take place the first week in November 2013.

The local authority has increased the amount of support given by the school improvement adviser and brokered the support of a writing consultant. The priority has been to address the issues in writing identified in the inspection. The action plan states that something similar will be done for reading and mathematics in the spring term 2014. There are plans to add detail to this later, based on a more up-to-date view of teaching and learning and pupil progress.

The local authority has replaced the governing body with an Interim Executive Board, whose members have the skills and knowledge to check and challenge the school's progress. The board meets every two weeks to undertake this role and complete the regular duties of a governing body.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The local authority statement of action is fit for purpose. However, further action must be taken to ensure that the action plan is sharpened by:

- reviewing the present success criteria related to pupils' progress based on the accurate data gathered this half term
- ensuring that the red, amber, green rating system is clearly linked to these outcomes and presented in a way that makes it easy for the Interim Executive Board, and the progress and review committee, to check progress and evaluate the impact of actions
- making clear who is paying for what, to avoid the confusion that presently exists and to allow the Interim Executive Board to prioritise and manage the school's finances accurately
- reviewing some timelines to ensure they bring about successful outcomes sooner rather than later.

The school's action plan is fit for purpose. Rightly, the executive headteacher has focused on some immediate key actions, which are making a difference. However, these need to be strengthened by adding measurable success criteria for pupils' performance based on newly secured assessment information. Both plans should be reviewed, as agreed during the monitoring visit, and sent to me by early November 2013.

In addition, further to our discussions, the local authority should take immediate and appropriate action to support the school in addressing the actions from a recent safeguarding audit and, in particular, some of the issues discussed during my visit.

The school appointed two newly qualified teachers before the inspection. However, no further appointments of newly qualified teachers should be made before the next monitoring inspection.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Interim Executive Board and the Director of Children's Services for Wakefield. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely



Anne Bowyer  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**