

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



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Mrs Hayley McNeill
Headteacher
Pollington-Balne Church of England Primary School
Balne Moor Road
Goole
DN14 0DZ

Dear Mrs McNeill

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Pollington-Balne Church of England Primary School, East Riding of Yorkshire

Following my visit to your school on 5 February 2014, 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 November 2013. 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:

- develop further the skills of those teachers with leadership roles to ensure improvements in provision and pupils' outcomes are sustained over time.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, the special educational needs co-ordinator, governors, including the Chair and vice-chair of the Governing Body and a representative from the local authority. The inspector briefly observed all lessons jointly with the headteacher. A number of documents, including records of monitoring activities and the school's improvement plans were also evaluated.

Context

Since the previous inspection in November, there have been no staff changes at the school.

Main findings

The headteacher has continued to accelerate the improvement strategies evident at the previous inspection. The impact is seen in improvements in pupils' achievement. The school's assessment data indicates that pupils are already making better progress across Key Stages 1 and 2. In particular, the proportion of pupils making expected or better progress in Years 5 and 6 is showing a significant improvement when compared to their earlier achievement levels. The school has reviewed its teaching arrangements for Years 3 and 4 with targeted provision now in place for literacy and numeracy. As a result, these pupils are now also starting to make up the lost ground from previous years and progress is accelerating. Those pupils with additional learning needs are also on track to reach their challenging targets

A range of well-targeted monitoring procedures are in place, including lesson observations and meetings to check pupils' progress, and all the school's actions to secure improvement are fully checked and reviewed every half term. Expected improvements in pupils' achievements and quality of teaching are linked to teachers' performance management objectives.

The school is continuing to improve classroom practice with a sharp focus on teachers' questioning skills and the development of pupils' ability to apply their knowledge and understanding to new problems and different contexts. Well-targeted professional development has supported these improvements which were evident in the sample of lessons observed during this monitoring visit. Pupils enjoyed the opportunities to reflect and explain their thinking through questioning and discussion, in both paired and group work and this, in turn, promoted better understanding. To further support these developments, the school has introduced procedures which ensure that all staff now have the opportunity to review, share and develop their practice through self-assessment and by observing each other's practice. School leaders recognise the need to further develop teachers' leadership skills to ensure improvements in teaching and subject areas are sustained over time.

The governing body continues to closely monitor and challenge the school's work. Governors frequently visit the school and have link responsibilities for aspects, curriculum areas and individual classes. School leaders report regularly to the governing body. Governors have worked swiftly to establish a 'parent council', as recommended at the previous inspection, to strengthen links with parents and carers.

External support

Since the previous inspection, the local authority has reviewed the school's work and provided well-judged support. Training for leaders, staff and governors has been tailored to requirements. Further support to develop subject leadership is planned. The school has no formal partnership arrangements, but plans are in place to share best practice with a local primary school.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for East Riding of Yorkshire.

Yours sincerely

Angela Headon

Her Majesty's Inspector