

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 566863
Direct F 01695 729320
Direct email:
jbennett@cfbt.com



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Mrs Margaret Beesley
Headteacher
Hugh Gaitskell Primary School
St Anthony's Drive
Beeston
Leeds
West Yorkshire
LS11 8AB

Dear Mrs Beesley

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Hugh Gaitskell Primary School, Leeds

Following my visit to your school on 25 March 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on the findings. 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 December 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:

- make sure the school improvement plan includes clear and measurable targets against which success can be judged over-time
- bring more urgency to developing the role of the governing body and their understanding of effective governance
- ensure a relentless focus on improving attendance and that this is reflected in the school improvement plan.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher and senior leaders, a group of pupils, middle leaders, governors and a representative of the local authority. I evaluated a range of documentation including: the school improvement plan; data tracking pupils' progress; monitoring reports and records of lesson observations. In addition we undertook a tour of the school to look briefly at teaching and learning and the changes made to provision since the inspection.

Context

Since the last inspection two new teaching staff joined the school. One member of the teaching staff has left. A new Chair of the Governing Body has been appointed.

Main findings

You, your senior leaders and staff have responded positively to the areas for improvement from the previous inspection. You have worked with urgency to take a range of appropriate actions that lay the foundations for improvements in the consistency and quality of teaching and learning across the school. Actions taken include:

- ensuring that pupils are more aware of their targets and the levels they have achieved
- making sure teachers use assessment information on prior attainment more effectively to plan appropriate and challenging activities
- developing the role of middle leaders so that they understand and that they are accountable for their areas of responsibility
- establishing links with a good school in order to observe and share best practice

Systems to check on the quality of teaching and learning have been tightened. There are regular reviews of how pupils are achieving and increasingly staff are held to account for the progress their pupils are making. A recent review carried out across the school shows that these actions are beginning to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

The school improvement plan addresses the areas that need improvement and has prioritised actions linked to improving teaching and learning. It gives a clear picture of proposed actions. Some of the actions required do not have clear milestones or success criteria against which the impact of actions can be systematically monitored and evaluated. This makes it difficult for governors to pinpoint with accuracy how well the school is improving over time. The actions identified to improve attendance are not yet sufficiently developed.

Governors have held a full meeting to agree the school action plan and they are knowledgeable about the actions being undertaken by you and the senior leaders. The plans for their own improvement are not fully developed. Improvements in this aspect must keep pace with the developments elsewhere in the school to help governors fulfil their role to support and challenge senior leaders.

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

External support is provided by the local authority includes visiting the school regularly to review progress and provide guidance. The school also works closely with other schools as part of a learning trust.

The support from external partners, including the local authority and links with other schools, has been prompt. You have plans for how these links may be used more effectively to help the school improve rapidly.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Leeds.

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Brown

Her Majesty's Inspector