

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

**Direct T** 01695 566939  
**Direct F** 01695 729320  
**Direct email:**  
glankertis@cfbt.com



26 June 2014

Mr John Newport  
Headteacher  
Marden Bridge Middle School  
Lovaine Avenue  
Whitley Bay  
Tyne and Wear  
NE25 8RW

Dear Mr Newport

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Marden Bridge Middle School, North Tyneside**

Following my visit to your school on 25 June 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 March 2014. 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:

- ensure that the governing body acts promptly on the findings of the review of governance currently underway
- extend the capacity of the leadership team so that it can move effectively to address the issues identified in the recent inspection
- refine and sharpen the focus of the school improvement plan so it can be used by leaders, including governors, to accurately measure the impact of their work in tackling the school's weaknesses
- provide updated information to parents and carers about the progress that is being made towards becoming a good school.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you, the Vice Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school action plan was evaluated. I also met with a group of middle leaders, visited classrooms, spoke with pupils about their work and reviewed a sample of their work books.

## **Context**

Since the section 5 inspection, which judged the school to require improvement, the Chair of Governors has resigned from the governing body.

## **Main findings**

The school is tackling all the key areas of weakness identified in the recent report. However, it must take concerted action to ensure that:

- those with a responsibility for fronting actions in the school improvement plan are specifically identified and their roles are made clear. The headteacher is identified as the sole leader on too many actions.
- there is more clarity in the school's plans about who is monitoring the progress of the actions being taken from those who are evaluating the impact of these actions in driving improvement.
- the increased time for mathematics teaching is carefully monitored by the school's leadership, especially the mathematics lead, to ensure that the weaknesses identified in mathematics teaching are eradicated.
- the senior leaders can demonstrate that the focus on improving weaker teachers is having a clear positive impact.
- the governors, led by the newly appointed Chair of Governors, act promptly on the findings of the review of governance.
- progress of the newly introduced marking policy, with its built in time for pupils to respond to their teachers' comments, is carefully assessed by leaders and governors.
- the more rigorous and regular approach to monitoring of the quality of teaching through classroom visits and scrutiny of work books is carefully assessed in order to evaluate whether the actions being taken are leading to improvements in pupils' progress.
- leaders and governors continue to act vigorously on the recommendations of the recent review of the school's use of pupil premium funding.

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

HMI was unable to meet with the full governing body so I will return to the school to do so as soon as possible in order to assess the effectiveness of the governing body's response to the review of governance.

## **External support**

The local authority has been prompt in helping the school address the weaknesses in teaching and leadership and has deployed a significant resource to help ensure improvements are made.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for North Tyneside.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Evans

**Her Majesty's Inspector**