

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



7 July 2014

Mrs Zoe Mawson
Headteacher
Heaton Primary School
Haworth Road
Bradford
West Yorkshire
BD9 6LL

Dear Mrs Mawson

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Heaton Primary School, Bradford

Following my visit to your school on 4 July 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:

- Re-visit the action plan to ensure that the success criteria makes clear what you expect and includes performance milestones, so that accurate and thorough checks can be made by governors on the school's progress. In addition, you need to show how governors will check on the impact of actions and accuracy of your evaluations.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you and other senior leaders, middle leaders, two representatives of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. A telephone conversation was held with the Chair of the Governing Body. The school action plan was evaluated and the school's latest performance information were evaluated. We visited lessons to look at progress with the areas for improvement in teaching.

Context

Since the last inspection you have been appointed as headteacher. You and governors have re-structured the leadership in the school.

Main findings

Your restructure of the leadership team has increased its capacity to drive forward improvements. This is a large school, where you must also manage a children's centre and resourced unit, so the distribution of leadership and training of leaders has been a key piece of strategic work for you. This has taken up a considerable amount of your time.

Teaching is improving, however the rate of improvement is inconsistent. Nevertheless, you are aware of this and have taken action to increase the frequency and rigour of checks in order to evaluate the impact of the significant investment in training and to hold teachers to account. Our visits to lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work showed that, although there have been some improvements in the quality of teaching, there is still much to do. The appointment of leaders to lead teaching and to support newly and recently qualified teachers is ensuring there is targeted support where it is needed.

The school has become a more cohesive learning community because of the work you have done. In the past the structure of the building has isolated each phase of learning. However, better communication means leaders and teachers now have a common purpose, which is to tackle underachievement. From September, plans are in place to give staff experience of teaching or supporting in other phases to extend their skills and knowledge. Staff value this opportunity and consequently, there is an emerging sense of excitement and optimism.

Immediate actions to address underachievement in Year 6 have borne fruit and indications are that more pupils are better-prepared to move on to the next stage of their learning than previously. You have amended targets to raise expectations and held staff to account. You have used the half termly progress meetings to target and tackle underachievement, especially in Year 6. Consequently, between the inspection and now, there have been improvements in pupil progress but, in some year groups this is still not as good as it needs to be.

You have taken action to ensure better transition for all year groups, but especially Year 2 as they move into Key Stage 2. You are determined that no time will be lost in learning as pupils settle in their new classes in September. You are poised to make the necessary checks from the outset.

Your action plan focuses on the areas for improvement with well-timed actions. However, the success criteria need to be sharpened so that all know what you expect to achieve and how this will look. Although you have measurable milestones, these are broad and may, when used, mask underachievement. In order to help you and governors to make accurate

checks, you need to ensure that you focus on the proportion of pupils making expected and better than expected progress and how well groups of pupils are doing, such as the most-able and those eligible for pupil premium funding. Although it is the intention of governors to take an active part in checking on the school's progress, it is unclear in the plan what their responsibilities are.

Those governors spoken with have a clear, shared commitment to ensuring the school becomes good sooner than later. They know the school well because of their involvement in the work of the school. However, they recognise they must sharpen their monitoring of the areas for improvement to make up ground from time spent appointing the headteacher and establishing a new leadership team.

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

The school draws effectively on the support of a long standing local primary partnership, resulting in improvements in the accuracy in assessment, quality of teaching and development of middle leaders. Work with external education consultants provides appropriate training for teachers and support to improve systems and procedures for data collection and the analysis of it. This means you are now using data more effectively to identify underachievement and to take the necessary action. However, the impact of training on teaching is not as effective as you anticipated. You recognise that this is due to you not making frequent and rigorous checks over this term.

The local authority is effective in checking on the impact of this partnership work and progress with the action plan. It must now continue to support you in the early days of your headship.

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

Yours sincerely

Anne Bowyer

Her Majesty's Inspector