

CFBT Inspection  
Services  
Suite 22 West Lancs  
Investment Centre  
Maple View  
Skelmersdale  
WN8 9TG

T 08456 40 40 40  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

Direct T 01625 548104  
Direct F 01625 548104  
Angela.Westington@ofsted.gov.uk



12 September 2007

Mrs A Bowden  
Headteacher  
Kingsway Primary School  
Kingsway Park Road  
Davyhulme  
Urmston  
Manchester  
M41 0SP

Dear Mrs Bowden

## SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF KINGSWAY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Following my visit with Christopher Griffin and Stephen Wall, Additional Inspectors, to your school on 11 and 12 September 2007, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures in March 2007. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – inadequate

Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be posted on the Ofsted website. Please inform the Regional Inspection Service Provider of any factual inaccuracies within 24 hours of the receipt of this letter.

I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the chair of governors and the Director of Education and Early Years Services for Trafford.

Yours sincerely

Angela Westington  
H M Inspector

## SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING OF KINGSWAY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Report from the first monitoring inspection: 11 and 12 September 2007.

### Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, observed 14 lessons or part lessons, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, members of the teaching staff, a group of pupils, governors, and representatives from the local authority.

### Context

Since the inspection in March 2007, the staffing disruption reported at that time has continued and increased with three members of teaching and support staff taking long-term sick leave and one other requesting a part-time appointment. At the time of this visit, the school has the most stable staffing structure it has had for some time, albeit through the appointment of teachers and a learning mentor on temporary contracts. Of the 6.2 teaching staff currently employed at the school, including the headteacher, 4.2 are permanent, including two job shares, and two are on temporary contracts for a year. Three permanent members of the teaching staff and one teaching assistant remain on sick leave.

On the first day of the inspection, children new to the Nursery joined the school; consequently, inspectors did not observe sessions on this day.

### Achievement and standards

The provisional 2007 results for Key Stage 2 national tests show no overall improvement on the 2006 figures: 73% of pupils gained Level 4 or above in English and 69% in mathematics, which are below the local authority and national averages. Science results improved with 81% of pupils gaining Level 4 and above although this is still below the national figure. Mathematics remains the weakest subject, its progress having stalled after improving in the previous year. These results place the school's performance at Level 4, at the low end within the national average band. In contrast, the proportion of pupils gaining the higher Level 5 in each subject is far too low: in English, only 11% compared to 33% nationally, in mathematics the figure is 15% and in science the figure is 19% compared to 33% and 46% respectively. This poor performance reflects a lack of challenge for the more able pupils, which is evident in the vast majority of the teaching observed. Scrutiny of pupils' work and lesson observations, including analyses carried out by local authority consultants, reveal gaps in pupils' knowledge, especially in mathematics, as a result of work that does not challenge and is not matched to ability. The writing of the older and more able pupils, for example, includes mainly simple sentence structures, not the more complex types required to gain higher marks.

Pupils have good speaking skills; they are confident and articulate, in many cases offer extended answers to questions and are willing to engage adults in discussion. The youngest pupils initiate conversations and ask questions. However, this level of overall ability is not reflected in their written work.

The 2007 results in Key Stage 1 national assessments fell in reading, writing and mathematics at Level 2, with no pupils gaining the higher level in writing and a drop in the proportion of pupils gaining the higher level in mathematics. The school reported a higher than usual rise in the proportion of pupils gaining the higher level in reading. The local authority conducted a moderation of the assessments in the three subjects and concluded that there was a high incidence of difference between the teachers' assessments and the test results.

The poor results in writing reflect the weaknesses in the teaching of writing at Key Stage 1 which, although it enables pupils to learn the basic skills, does not push them forward. Consequently, there is too little opportunity for pupils to write in a range of styles, and the more able pupils do not write at length often enough. In addition, the teaching is not matched to pupils' abilities, thus hindering their progress even further. For example, despite the introduction of a very clear writing progress tracking grid which identifies the level each pupil is at, the teaching does not match the work given to pupils with this information and so it does not move them on towards the next level. A clear example of this was observed in a lesson in which younger, more able pupils, previously assessed as having achieved Level 2c in writing, were required to cut out pictures and stick them onto a sheet alongside text, and either cut out matching text or copy text onto another sheet.

Standards in the Foundation Stage remain broadly average and in line with the local authority's average. The 2007 Foundation Stage data show that the weakest aspect remains linking sounds to letters, a critical area for developing children's writing skills. Children's performance in this area is consistently below the average for the local authority. In contrast, children's knowledge and understanding of early mathematical concepts is stronger.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in March 2007:

- Improve achievement and raise standards, particularly in Key Stage 2 – inadequate

#### Personal development and well-being

Pupils' enjoyment of their education, although satisfactory, remains a cause for concern. Too many still find it 'boring' or 'too easy'. The school council has been reconstituted but has yet to make an impact on pupils' involvement within school.

Nevertheless, relationships are positive and pupils take the opportunities available to develop responsibility such as helping younger pupils at lunchtime. The good assembly observed provided the opportunity for spiritual reflection, was enjoyable and emphasised the importance of community spirit and helping others.

#### Quality of provision

Inspectors observed 14 lessons or part lessons. Of these, four were good, seven satisfactory and three inadequate. Overall, this profile of teaching is inadequate to move the school forward at the pace that is necessary. It results in too many pupils

not making the progress of which they are capable as they move up through the school. Teaching is not yet sufficiently rigorous to tackle the school's persistent legacy of underachievement.

In the better lessons observed teaching was conducted at a good pace and included a variety of activities which kept pupils attentive and interested. In these lessons, pupils made good progress. However, these lessons were the exception rather than the norm. The school now has systems for tracking and monitoring pupils' progress but teachers do not routinely incorporate this powerful information in their planning. Therefore lesson planning does not consistently set challenging targets for individual pupils; neither does it meet the needs of different ability groups. Teachers do not incorporate a sufficiently wide range of activities in their lessons to keep pupils on task. Pace is too often pedestrian, with the result that teaching and learning lack a sense of real purpose and excitement. Too much teaching lacks challenge, particularly for higher-attaining pupils. 'I think this is too easy' was a repeated pupil comment. Many lessons are too dominated by the teacher, with the result that pupils are not actively engaged in their own learning; this limits the progress they make and the enjoyment they derive from their learning. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and conscientiously. However, their comments are not consistently helpful in telling pupils what they need to do to improve the quality of their work.

The curriculum is satisfactory. It offers a broad and balanced range of subjects. Lessons are long, however, and make demands on teachers to build in a variety of activities to keep pupils motivated and interested. The inclusion of daily handwriting practice is unpopular with the pupils, does little to inspire enjoyment of writing and makes a questionable contribution to presentational skills. The school has not yet explored ways of making imaginative links between subjects to add further enjoyment to learning. The new information and communication technology (ICT) facilities are much appreciated by the pupils. There is a good range of enrichment activities in which many pupils take part. These make a good contribution to pupils' awareness of healthy lifestyles and enjoyment.

Since the March inspection the school and the local authority have worked systematically to improve the school's ICT resources. This has led to the upgrading of facilities in the ICT suite, the purchase of a mobile laptop facility, and the installation of updated software. Consequently, pupils have more opportunity to use computers in their learning. The school has sensibly prepared a timetable that allocates each class specific times in the ICT suite to encourage more extensive use of the facilities. It is not yet feasible to gauge the impact of this development at this very early stage of the school year. The time provided for technical support has increased to ensure the reliability of equipment. Arrangements are in place for teachers to receive extra training during nominated lessons to increase their effectiveness in managing learning through the use of ICT.

The school's action plan includes the need to ensure that the use of ICT effectively leads to improved standards in all subjects. Lesson observations confirm that this is an area where further development is required. The lesson planning observed during the visit did not consistently make sure that activities effectively challenged the different levels of abilities in a class, thus restricting progress. The school has a

scheme of work for ICT but rightly intends to review and build on this by the end of this term, with support from the local authority. There are rigorous methods for assessing and tracking progress in ICT during the Nursery and Reception years, but this rigour is less apparent in the systems used in the rest of the school.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in March 2007:

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it ensures that pupils make the progress of which they are capable – inadequate
- Address weaknesses in ICT provision by ensuring that the school has sufficient up-to-date resources – satisfactory

### Leadership and management

At the inspection in March 2007, the school was asked to refine its development planning so that it would be more concise, focused and effective in raising standards and achievement. The first two parts of this point have been achieved. The school planning documentation is now clearer and sharper and is based upon the key issues. However, the impact of this revision to the planning is yet to be seen in higher standards and achievement. There are ways in which the resources identified in the plan could be used more effectively. For example, the local authority has provided an associate headteacher to support the school in its development. Until now she has worked with the school council; however, her time could be more profitably used to work alongside the substantive headteacher in lesson observations, driving forward the necessary changes in teachers' use of recently acquired assessment data and in developing subject managers.

Since March, the school has struggled to move forward on the points for development overall, largely because of the continued instability of staffing. This has left too few permanent members of staff to share the workload and responsibility for moving forward on the changes required. However, the school now has a reasonably stable staffing complement for the next twelve months and so is in a better position to make more rapid and effective progress. Leadership at all levels across the school remains a cause for concern, as does governance. Subject leadership, particularly in English and mathematics, lacks impact and is not proving effective in driving up standards. The school has too optimistic a view of its progress. Governors do not know the work of the school well enough still and are not able to question and probe sufficiently to hold the school to account.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in March 2007:

- Refine development planning so that it is concise and focused and effective in raising standards and achievement – inadequate

### External support

The local authority has provided a lot of support through the deployment of consultants, advisers, an associate headteacher and legal and professional help for staffing issues. Its effectiveness has been held back by the staffing difficulties the school continues to face. At one point during the summer term, the local authority

had to scale back the support because most staff in the school were supply teachers and, rightly, the authority did not consider training supply staff to be best use of its resources. The local authority consultants have been well deployed to work on the school's data, analyse test results and provide the school with a clear overview of its pupils' progress, without which the school would be in a much worse position. However, this information is not yet being used by teachers to plan and provide challenging lessons.

The action plan provided by the local authority is clear and unambiguous. The associate headteacher, however, could be better used in supporting lesson observations, training staff to use the assessment and tracking data to better plan their lessons, and developing subject leaders.

#### Priorities for further improvement

- Focus on the use of assessment data in lessons to improve pupils' rate of progress.
- Focus on the higher-attaining pupils.
- Focus on mathematics and writing.