

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 01695 566930  
Direct F 01695 729320  
e-mail [gtunncliffe@cfbt.com](mailto:gtunncliffe@cfbt.com)

30 April 2010

Mrs J D Metcalfe  
Headteacher  
Gainsborough Primary and Nursery School  
Belgrave Road  
Crewe  
Cheshire  
CW2 7NH

Dear Mrs Metcalfe

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 29 April 2010 and for the information which you provided during my visit. Please pass on my thanks to the pupils I talked to during the day and to the Chair of the Governing Body and parents and carers who gave up their time to talk to me at short notice.

The school was formed by the amalgamation of two schools in 2007. It moved from two separate sites into its present building immediately following the last inspection.

As a result of the inspection on 12-13 May 2008, the school was asked to:

- involve pupils more fully in evaluating their own learning and progress, so that they always know what to do to reach their targets
- ensure that all teachers use assessment rigorously and accurately to plan work that is sufficiently challenging for all pupils, particularly the higher attainers
- ensure that subject leaders use data accurately to measure the impact of their work to promote higher standards and achievement.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school has made outstanding progress in making improvements and outstanding progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

In the lessons observed during the visit, pupils never made less than good progress. The school's tracking records indicate that all groups of pupils are achieving well, with learning targets tailored to challenge each individual pupil. Pupils at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 are set to reach standards in the national tests and assessments in 2010 that are at least in line with those of most primary schools. More able pupils are already working at the higher levels for their ages. These standards are significantly higher than those reached in previous years. Consistently better progress is being made from the Early Years Foundation Stage onwards, as the inconsistencies within teaching and learning that were noted in the last inspection are eradicated.

Pupils continue to enjoy school to the full. Their behaviour and motivation to learn, rated as good in the last inspection, have improved further. During the visit these were of the highest order, with the oldest pupils, in particular, setting an excellent example for younger ones. Pupils took great pride in their work and standards of presentation, particularly handwriting, were high. Parents confirmed that their children love coming to school. Pupils are very proud of their new school, and its resources, especially since they have had a hand in its design in many cases. They said they felt very safe. They have complete confidence in the headteacher, teachers and all staff in their ability to support and care for them. Pupils from varied ethnic and social backgrounds learned and played together in harmony.

The quality of teaching and learning has improved significantly. The teaching observed during the visit was never less than good and a good proportion was outstanding. Some of the strengths of teaching that were recorded during the previous inspection, notably the quality of the relationships between pupils and their teachers, have been sustained. The most improvement has occurred in the consistency and quality of teachers' assessment. Teachers know exactly the levels at which pupils are working. They share this information with pupils who, in turn, know what is required for them to move to the next level. The monitoring of pupils' progress is now very effective and embedded. The local authority is using the school's practice in the Early Years Foundation Stage as an exemplar for other schools. In the lessons seen, teachers worked particularly hard to make learning interesting and relevant to pupils, and older pupils were quick to say how much fun they had. The building and grounds have been imaginatively developed. They provide more opportunities for small group work, for learning outside and for learning about the environment. As a consequence, the curriculum has been further enhanced. The improvements in the accuracy and use of assessment have led to the better identification of those pupils who were falling behind, or those who required extra challenge. This has enabled the school to make better use of its staff of teaching assistants and learning mentors to provide intervention programmes. The school has pupils with a wide range of special educational needs and/or disabilities, including some who are socially and emotionally vulnerable. These pupils continue to be supported and provided for very well.

The leadership of the headteacher continues to be a crucial factor in the development and improvement of the school. It was recognised at all levels: by representatives of the governing body, staff, pupils and parents and carers, and in monitoring reports by the School Improvement Partner. The headteacher has the full confidence of all groups and is providing the new school with an exceptional clarity of vision and direction, to an even greater extent than that recorded during the last inspection. The governing body continues to work effectively, and is developing its capacity to challenge and support the school further still. However, the most significant development in leadership and management in the past two years has been in the building of a strong middle leadership group. This is giving the school increased strength and depth of leadership and management that successfully links the school's senior management and classroom practice. As the middle leaders take on more responsibility for areas for improvement, the senior leaders are becoming more effective in rigorously monitoring the impact of initiatives on pupils. Teamwork is now excellent. The school continues to build on other strengths noted in the previous inspection. The work with parents and carers, the school's involvement in its community and its progress in becoming a full-service extended school have developed, facilitated by the improved provision within the new school. There are further improved relationships with its partners, including with the private provider of out-of-school care and with external agencies.

The school has gone through a challenging period of settlement following amalgamation and its consequences and the move to a single site. The inspection report of May 2008 recognised the rapid improvement since amalgamation. This visit confirms that the rapid improvement has been fully sustained now the school has moved to its new site.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Brian Padgett  
Her Majesty's Inspector