

Suite 22  
West Lancashire Investment Centre  
Maple View  
White Moss Business Park  
Skelmersdale  
WN8 9TG

T 0300 123 1231  
Text Phone: 0161 6188524  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

**Direct T** 01695 566934  
**Direct F** 01695 729320  
**Direct email:** gtunncliffe@cfbt.com



15 October 2010

Mrs Lyn Parmenter  
Acting Headteacher  
Callands Primary School  
Callands Road  
Callands  
Warrington  
Cheshire  
WA5 9RJ

Dear Mrs Parmenter

### **Special measures: monitoring inspection of Callands Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 13 and 14 October 2010, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in November 2009. The full list of the areas for improvement which were identified during that inspection are set out in the annex to this letter. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – satisfactory

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – satisfactory

Newly Qualified Teachers may not be appointed

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be posted on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Warrington.

Yours sincerely

John Coleman  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in November 2009**

- Raise standards and achievement, by:
  - improving teaching by increasing the pace and expectations in lessons
  - making sure that the work set for the pupils is challenging and closely matches their abilities, particularly for the more able pupils.
- Improve the overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage, by:
  - improving the monitoring of children's progress
  - creating more opportunities for independent learning
  - ensuring that an effective Early Years Foundation Stage leader is involved in teaching the reception children.
- Improve leadership and management at all levels, by:
  - introducing strategies to monitor rigorously the effectiveness of the school's work
  - ensuring that teachers plan and teach lessons that enable all groups of pupils to make good progress
  - ensuring that governors are provided with the training and information they need to support and challenge the school.

## **Special measures: monitoring of Callands Primary School**

### **Report from the second monitoring inspection on 13 and 14 October 2010**

#### **Evidence**

The inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with pupils, staff and representatives of the governing body and the local authority.

#### **Context**

At the end of the summer term 2010, the executive headteacher and the acting deputy headteacher returned to their substantive posts in their own schools. At the beginning of the autumn term, two new staff were appointed by the local authority to fill these roles. The acting deputy headteacher has a full-time teaching commitment which is allowing the acting headteacher to provide a full-time leadership role. The executive headteacher provides mentor support for the acting headteacher two days per week. There are two governor vacancies which are currently being filled and there is a newly elected Chair of Governors. The class structure in Key Stage 2 has been reorganised and, overall, the school has one class fewer than in the previous academic year. The school continues to receive support from local authority consultants and advisers.

#### **Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning**

The provisional results of the Year 6 pupils' 2010 national tests show that standards are rising and the rate of progress is improving. Teacher assessments for pupils at the end of Year 2 also show similarly improving progress. Inspection evidence of a scrutiny of the work in pupils' English books from the summer term shows improving quality of pupils' writing and an increase in the volume and regularity of work. Work seen in pupils' books in the autumn term does not indicate such notable improvement, although the themes of work covered in this period are largely focused on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills through drama and literature. Observations of lessons during this monitoring inspection show an improving profile to the quality of teaching. There is a greater proportion of good lessons than that seen at the last visit. The monitoring carried out by the school indicates that there has been a steady improvement to lessons during the last few months. There remains, though, significant variation in the quality of teaching which ranges from inadequate to good. The strongest teaching is in upper Key Stage 2 and in Key Stage 1. Pupils' progress varies in direct correlation to the quality of teaching received.

Overall, while improvement has been achieved in the delivery of many lessons there is inconsistency between classes. Additionally, in some classes throughout the school, the use of assessment to inform the level of challenge to pupils is not yet

fully in place. Consequently, the pace and expectations set for many pupils, especially the most able, are too low. Progress in this important aspect of the area for improvement is just satisfactory.

Progress since the last inspection on the areas for improvement

- Raise standards and achievement, by:
  - improving teaching by increasing the pace and expectations in lessons
  - making sure that the work set for the pupils is challenging and closely matches their abilities, particularly for the more able pupils.
  - **satisfactory**

### **The effectiveness of provision**

The school's leaders and the staff have worked hard with the support of the local authority to improve the quality of lessons. Since the last monitoring inspection, the school has assessed more than 60 lessons and evaluations show that the number of inadequate lessons is reducing and the number of good lessons is increasing. Inspection observations confirm the features of lessons seen in the school's monitoring. Teachers' plans are better and are now in a common format with clear outlines of what is to be taught. Classrooms are brighter, well organised and motivating for pupils with lots of their work on display. In many lessons there are increasingly good opportunities for pupils to discuss their work and learn from each other. Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning are consistently good. Teaching assistants give good support to individual pupils. Most pupils say they enjoy lessons. This overall improvement in the delivery of lessons is beginning to increase the progress which pupils make. However, the rate of progress is improving only slowly because many tasks and activities set for pupils in lessons are undemanding and lack sufficient challenge to extend pupils' learning fully. In part, this is because the school does not yet make enough use of the assessment of pupils' prior attainment to ensure that the pace and expectations for pupils' learning is high enough. Also, there is a significant variation in the quality of teaching between classes in different parts of the school. This inconsistency hinders pupils' progress over time.

An analysis of teachers' timetables reveals significant imbalance in the time given to different subjects in the curriculum. There are variations between classes and year groups in the amount of time given to subjects. For example, in one class only 45 minutes is currently identified for the teaching of science each week, which is insufficient. On the other hand, some classes provide in excess of four hours per week for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education, which is more than that found in most similar schools. Overall, the timetables place insufficient focus and priority on the areas of the curriculum in greatest need and, as such, limit the school's ability to raise standards quickly and to improve the rate of pupils' progress in the core basic skills.

## Early Years Foundation Stage

The frequency and regularity of monitoring children's progress is improving steadily and teachers are better at noting children's achievements and recording these on a spreadsheet against the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum objectives. The usefulness and accuracy of this is limited and there is little potential for improvement because teachers do not have a secure understanding of the starting points of many children. Most children join the school after receiving some form of pre-school provision such as in a nursery. Despite this, teachers have very little evidence about what the children have previously learnt and achieved. Folders organised to record pre-school and home information are empty and make no contribution to informing what children should learn next. There is too little done to assess children's needs when they start school and to ensure that the activities in lessons are suitably challenging. As a result, many children make inadequate progress in lessons.

Opportunities for children to develop their independence are provided in each reception class. Children's learning when engaged in these activities is inadequate overall, and varies significantly between classes. In some lessons, the teacher plans activities which are carefully structured and guided by the staff; this is an improvement since the last visit. Consequently, the children engage well and, for the most part, they consolidate their learning and enjoy the tasks. However, the progress they make is very limited because the tasks are too easy for many children, expectations are too low and children make insufficient gains in new skills and knowledge. In other lessons, there is a lack of purpose to many activities especially those where children are expected to engage independently. As a result, children's behaviour deteriorates, they wander away from the area of activity and no learning takes place.

The school has ensured that an Early Years Foundation Stage leader is involved in teaching the reception children. However, there has been insufficient improvement in the leadership and management of this key stage or to the much-needed improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. There is too little understanding about how young children learn and about how the provision should be organised.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on the areas for improvement

- Improve the overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
  - improving the monitoring of children's progress
  - creating more opportunities for independent learning
  - ensuring that an effective Early Years Foundation Stage leader is involved in teaching the reception children.
  - **inadequate**

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management**

A clear and robust plan is in place which outlines the monitoring activities of the school's leaders. This is improving the rigour of monitoring and ensuring it is systematic and timely. For example, the governors' action committee meets several times a term and the minutes show a determination to improve the performance of the school. Governors have received training on 'how to be a good governor,' provided by the local authority. This is helping them to be more challenging and to ask pertinent and searching questions in meetings with the school's senior leaders. Following the resignation of the Chair of the Governing Body, the governing body acted swiftly and decisively to appoint a new Chair. There are two vacancies on the governing body, for which there are elections taking place.

The recently appointed acting deputy headteacher is providing a good example of effective teaching and she is implementing a new electronic recording system for pupils' attainment. This is bringing about improvements to the teaching quality of other staff and is dealing with the urgent need to ensure that the school leaders can accurately measure the rate of pupils' progress on a regular basis. The executive headteacher has quickly acquired an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses through rigorous monitoring of lessons and careful analysis of the school's provision and outcomes. Her mentoring of the acting headteacher is improving the strategic planning and is quickening improvements to the systems for managing staff performance. The acting headteacher provides increasingly effective direction for the school.

The school's leaders are successfully improving the overall quality of teaching through better monitoring and targeted staff training and support. Pupils' progress is slowly showing signs of improvement. However, there has been insufficient rigour to the monitoring of the Early Years Foundation Stage which, in the school's improvement plans, is scheduled for later this term.

Progress since the last inspection on the areas for improvement

- Improve leadership and management at all levels, by:
  - introducing strategies to monitor rigorously the effectiveness of the school's work
  - ensuring that teachers plan and teach lessons that enable all groups of pupils to make good progress
  - ensuring that governors are provided with the training and information they need to support and challenge the school.
  - **satisfactory**

## **External support**

The school receives good support from the local authority. The School Improvement Partner provides suitable analysis of the school's performance. Consultancy support

gives clear advice to staff and leaders about how best to improve classroom practice and curriculum leadership.

**Priorities for further improvement**

- Ensure that the time available for the delivery of the school curriculum is maximised and suitably prioritised.