

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

T 0300 123 1231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524 **Direct T** 01695 566934
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk **Direct F** 01695 729320
www.ofsted.gov.uk **Direct email:** gtunnicliffe@cfbt.com



14 January 2011

Mrs Yvonne Brown
Executive Headteacher
Hindley Green St John's Junior and Infant School
Atherton Road
Hindley Green
Wigan
Lancashire
WN2 4SD

Dear Mrs Brown

Notice to improve: monitoring inspection of Hindley Green St John's Junior and Infant School

Thank you for the help, which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 13 January 2011 and for the information, which you provided during the inspection. Please can you pass on my thanks to the members of the governing body and the two representatives of the local authority for sparing time to meet with me.

The deputy headteacher retired at the end of the summer and the headteacher left the school in November. There have been significant changes to the teaching staff and to the leadership team of the school. The headteacher of an outstanding local school, has acted as executive headteacher for two days a week on a temporary basis. A senior leader from the same school has been working full time at St John's and has the designation of head of learning. Three members of teaching staff are absent on long-term sickness. Two teachers started in January and one returned from maternity leave. There has been a slight increase in the number of pupils.

As a result of the inspection in June 2010, the school was asked to address the most important areas for improvement which are set out in the annex to this letter.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making inadequate progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the pupils' achievement. The inspection has raised very serious concerns. These concerns will be considered by the Regional Director, Inspection Delivery, who will decide when the school will receive further inspection.

Pupils' achievement has deteriorated since the previous inspection. Lesson observations, a scrutiny of pupils' work and an examination of the school's assessment data show that too many pupils are not making enough progress. Most

lessons observed during this monitoring inspection were inadequate. Pupils made inadequate progress because the teaching was dull, they were engaged in unchallenging activities and the teaching did not extend their skills, understanding or knowledge. Pupils in Years 5 and 6, however, were making good progress because lessons were inspiring. In these year groups, the teachers' high expectations of pupils contributed to them developing new concepts and skills while consolidating and extending the understanding they already had. In one outstanding science lesson, for example, pupils worked purposefully in groups to identify animals in different habitats extending and applying their understanding of carnivores, herbivores and omnivores and of the similarities between all animals.

The executive headteacher and head of learning have done much to stabilise the turbulence in staffing. They have had significant impact in only a few weeks on improving the safeguarding and the care for pupils. For example, they have established medical and care plans for pupils, re-introduced fire drills, and introduced new procedures for signing in and out. Despite this, safeguarding requirements are not met. For example, the single central record is incomplete and does not meet requirements, and the care for pupils by some members of staff has deteriorated since the previous inspection.

The quality of leadership and management of the school has improved significantly in the last few months. Within a short time, the temporary senior leaders have taken steps to improve resources and develop systems for monitoring teaching and learning. The executive headteacher has worked well in partnership with the local authority in a very short time has improved provision for information and communication technology (ICT). The school has invested in software licenses, new equipment and in a school network. She has had a significant impact on improving the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. by improving individual education plans, care and medical plans and interventions to support groups of pupils. School improvement plans are clearer and have a better focus on improving pupils' achievement. The executive headteacher and the head of learning have an accurate view of the quality of teaching and learning and have tried to improve the quality of lessons. Improvement, however, is hindered by staffing turbulence and inadequate teaching in all key stages and the Early Years Foundation Stage persists.

School finances are a significant concern and have deteriorated. There is a very large deficit. The school's capacity to develop further has not improved. There is no plan in place to provide stable leadership for the school and because so many staff are absent, the impact middle leaders have had on pupils' achievement is limited. The school is over reliant on the excellent leadership provided by the head of learning and the executive headteacher. These leaders, however, are temporary and are employed by another school. There is still no effective audit, policy or action plan in place for community cohesion.

The local authority's action plan is fit for purpose. The local authority has provided good support to the school through, for example, the use of an advanced skills teacher, the support of consultants and advisors and training and support for members of the governing body. The authority has also worked with the school to improve its provision for English. The recent successes and improvements overseen by the executive headteacher are fragile. As an urgent priority the local authority, governing body, diocese and school leaders recognise that there is still more to do to work together to improve the safeguarding and care for pupils; the stability and future of the school's leadership; pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching.

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

Yours sincerely

Allan Torr
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in June 2010

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that senior leaders and governors recognise the urgency required in raising the performance of the school
 - establishing clear milestones against which the school's improvement can be monitored and evaluated
 - encouraging the governing body and leaders and managers at all levels to evaluate performance information and use it to develop plans for improvement that link directly to the required improvement in outcomes for all pupils.
- Raise the quality of teaching to consistently good or better, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage, by:
 - ensuring that concise teaching plans always meet the learning needs of all pupils
 - providing professional development for staff to enable them to understand the effective use of assessment
 - ensuring that the most able pupils tackle sufficiently challenging work.
- Promote community cohesion by:
 - developing a detailed analysis of the school community and its needs
 - effectively evaluating and using opportunities that give pupils the chance to mix and communicate with those from different ethnic, religious and socio-economic backgrounds.