

CfBT Inspection Services T 0300 1231231
Suite 22 enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
West Lancs Investment Centre www.ofsted.gov.uk
Maple View
Skelmersdale
WN8 9TG

Direct T 01695 566934
Direct F 01695 729320
gtunncliffe@cfbt.com
www.cfbt-inspections.com



11 February 2011

Mr J Clark
Headteacher
Dial Park Primary School
Halfmoon Lane
Offerton
Stockport
Cheshire
SK2 5LB

Dear Mr Clark

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Dial Park Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 10 February 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussion and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Also, thank you to the pupils who met with me and to the Chair of the Governing Body for our discussion.

Since the last inspection, following the promotion of a senior teacher to another school, the governing body has appointed one new teacher deployed in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Significant reductions to the number of teaching assistants resulted in enforced restructuring of the responsibilities and roles of the support staff functions. The local authority has provided a range of support to the school through consultants and advisors.

As a result of the inspection on 11 and 12 November 2009, 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 has made satisfactory progress in making improvements and satisfactory progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

The results of national tests for pupils in Year 6 in 2010 showed improved rates of progress in English and mathematics. Though attainment levels for Year 6 in 2010 were lower than in 2009, this represented improved progress given the lower starting points of this group of pupils. School assessments of pupils' attainment showed improvement to the standards reached by pupils in Year 2 in 2010. School data, lesson observations by the school and local authority monitoring provide evidence that progress has continued to improve in the current academic year. Inspection evidence from this visit confirms this better progress. Attainment is rising as shown by the current work in pupils' books. Pupils in Year 6 are on track to attain higher standards.

January 2011



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

The outdoor learning environment in the Early Years Foundation Stage is improved and provides purposeful, well-organised resources which enrich children's learning. Local authority officers provide good support to aid the school's improvement in this area. All areas of learning are supported through a range of large practical equipment and thoughtfully set out activities. Children enjoy learning in the outdoors and happily cooperate with each other. There is regular use of the outdoors learning areas.

The progress made by pupils is increasing because of the successful strategies put in place by leaders to improve the quality of teaching and learning, in particular, through effective support and intervention. This shows the school's improved capacity to improve. Very good use is made of computers and digital technology to generate pupils' interest in learning and to aid concentration. For example, the school acquired additional funds to purchase 'visualisers' which enable digital projection of handwritten resources. This was seen in a number of lessons where teachers demonstrated sounds and letters which were instantly displayed on the whiteboard screen. There is a clear focus on developing pupils' basic skills, such as in speaking and listening. Provision for this is improved as seen in the new arrangements in Year 1 and Year 2 where pupils are set in groups based on prior attainment. These groups are well supported by teaching assistants and parent volunteers. It is too soon to measure the full impact of this on pupils' attainment, but a sound start has been made. The school is improving its use of assessment to identify pupils who are underachieving. Additional support is provided to a significant number of pupils. For example, in Year 5, a group of pupils are receiving support from a teacher provided by the local authority. Each morning pupils are taught specific language and communication skills. This work is challenging and targets for improvement require pupils to progress at twice the nationally expected rate.

Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is improving. However, it is variable and not enough is expected of all pupils in all lessons all of the time. Pupils told the inspector that some lessons are too easy because they already knew what was being taught; they had 'done it before.' Partly, this is because the targets set by the school for pupils' attainment are inconsistent. Some are challenging and aspirational, as in the Year 5 group, and others are too low. Also, there is some inconsistency in the impact of teachers' planning on the outcomes for pupils' learning in lessons. This is because not all plans make sufficient use of assessment information to ensure that every pupil is challenged to make good gains in learning new skills and knowledge.

Attendance rates are improving, but the amount of lesson time lost by absent pupils remains too high. The school is working hard to improve this with some success. The support of the local authority officer does much to ensure that communication between home and school is effective. Newsletters each week keep parents up to date with attendance figures. Celebrations encourage good attendance. The school has clear procedures for ensuring parents and carers fully comply with the governments requirements, including penalty notices through the courts where appropriate.

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

Mr John Coleman
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place on 11-12 November 2009.

- Raise attainment in pupils' basic skills by improving the quality of teaching to the standard of the best.
- Improve the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by ensuring children have continuous access to outside play which caters for all the areas of learning.