

CfBT Inspection Services T 0300 1231231  
Suite 22 [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
West Lancs Investment Centre [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)  
Maple View  
Skelmersdale  
WN8 9TG

**Direct T** 01695 566934  
**Direct F** 01695 729320  
[gtunncliffe@cfbt.com](mailto:gtunncliffe@cfbt.com)  
[www.cfbt-inspections.com](http://www.cfbt-inspections.com)



11 February 2011

Mrs M Wildey  
Headteacher  
Moorthorpe Primary School  
Regent Street  
Moorthorpe  
Pontefract  
West Yorkshire  
WF9 2BL

Dear Mrs Wildey

### **Notice to improve: monitoring inspection of Moorthorpe Primary School**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school with Jane Millward HMI on 10 February 2011 and for the information which you provided during the inspection. We also welcomed the opportunity to talk with the associate headteacher, other members of staff, governors and local authority officers. Please extend our thanks to all those involved.

Since the previous inspection the senior leadership team has been expanded. An associate headteacher, appointed by the local authority in October 2010, is currently working with the school three days each week. The Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body have been in place since September 2010 and three additional governors have been recruited.

As a result of the inspection on 23 and 24 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.

Due to inaccurate data and inconsistent tracking and assessment procedures senior leaders do not yet have a clear view of the current attainment and progress of pupils. Teacher assessments for the previous academic year have not been externally validated. Given the concerns about the quality of data and assessment for the current year, this raises concerns about the reliability of the 2009/2010 end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 assessments.

The good provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage results in most pupils entering the school having made good progress from their individual starting points.. At the end of Key Stage 1 in 2010, pupils attained broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. However, far fewer pupils than the school anticipated attained the higher Level 3. At the end of Key Stage 2 in 2010, pupils made satisfactory progress and attained

January 2011



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

broadly average standards. School data indicates that the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level in both English and mathematics improved, rising to just above nationally expected levels for the first time in three years.

Pupils' attendance in the academic year 2009/2010 plummeted sharply and was low. The rate of persistent absence rose. No convincing explanation was offered to account for this. Nonetheless, a clear focus on raising attendance in the current year is resulting in improvement so that attendance rates look set to be close to average.

The quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is variable. Of the five part lessons seen during this visit, two were inadequate, two were good and one was satisfactory. The ability range in some mixed-age classes is too wide, creating difficulties for teachers when they are trying to plan activities to match the pupils' differing needs. Teachers do not routinely discuss pupils' progress or share information about them as they move between classes or years in any formal and structured way. This lack of dialogue linked with the weaknesses in assessment and tracking mean that teachers are not able to identify accurately the levels that pupils are working at, measure their progress and spot any underachievement in order to implement appropriate interventions. A whole-school marking system has yet to be adopted. Too much of the pupils' work in books goes unmarked. Where it is marked, there is little evidence of meaningful written feedback to help pupils to improve their work. Insufficient attention is paid to presentation and spelling. Some of the pupils' written work clearly indicates that they are not making enough progress for their age and, in a few instances, learning regresses. The use of individual pupil learning targets is scarce.

The pupils' welfare is a high priority for the school and is taken seriously by staff at all levels. The school currently meets statutory requirements in respect of safeguarding. The single central record is an example of good practice and includes governors and parent helpers. Meticulous attention to detail is a feature of this record keeping. High quality child protection and safeguarding training has been delivered to all staff and the governing body. Systems to log incidents have been revised and are now good. Risk assessments are carried out routinely but there is scope to refine these further. Much work has been undertaken to update policy documents, although most are still being presented to the governing body for formal approval.

There have been significant changes in the constitution of the governing body. Newly appointed governors have relevant and suitable expertise to contribute to the life of the school. Governors take their responsibilities seriously and are very committed to driving through school improvement. The governing body's role is in the early stages of development and is currently undertaking an appropriate training programme. This is being provided by the local authority to ensure governors are well informed and can fulfil their statutory duties. The community cohesion policy is in its embryonic stages. As yet, the senior leaders do not have an effective plan in place to indicate how they intend to develop and meet the community cohesion function within or beyond the school.

At the most senior level, leaders do not plan their actions or monitor the school's progress rigorously enough or on a systematic basis. An accurate assessment of the school's strengths and weaknesses founded on robust self-evaluation activities has not yet emerged. Senior leaders are unable to identify areas for development and have no clear understanding of what needs to be done to improve the quality of teaching and learning consistently throughout the school. Middle managers, who have recently joined the leadership team and the teaching staff alike, receive inadequate guidance, support and performance management. They have been left to soldier on and come up with their own individual strategies and solutions. Senior leaders have not demonstrated the capacity to secure future improvement. While they have many good intentions, they have failed to provide clear direction or drive through improvement with any sense of urgency.

The local authority's statement of action fulfils requirements. The accompanying action plan is comprehensive. It paints a very clear picture for school leaders of the actions needed to secure improvement and the resources it will provide to help them achieve this. The local authority has provided good support for the school, for instance, through the appointment of the associate headteacher and the training provided for staff and governors. The associate headteacher has proffered sensitive support and guidance to staff and there are early signs that morale is improving as a result. Both the School Improvement Partner and the associate headteacher have pressed home to the headteacher the urgent need to develop a shared strategic vision and well-targeted school improvement plan. To date, these activities have had little impact on school improvement. This is because many of the aspects of support identified and suggested require the senior leaders to be proactive and take the initiative; as yet, this has not happened. Consequently, whole-school strategies, robust systems and the impetus required to improve the effectiveness of school leaders so as to improve outcomes for pupils are still sorely lacking.

The inspection has raised very serious concerns. These will be considered by the appropriate Regional Director, Inspection Delivery, who will decide when the school will receive further inspection.

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

Wendy Ripley  
Her Majesty's Inspector

## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place on 23 and 24 June 2010**

- With immediate effect, take steps to mitigate risk to pupils, by:
  - setting up systems and procedures with clear lines of accountability to ensure the safety and welfare of all pupils
  - establishing clear management responsibilities and record keeping in relation to child protection
  - establishing clear management responsibilities and record keeping in relation to vulnerable pupils
  - setting up scrupulous practices and record keeping in relation to accidents, incidents and medical needs
  - carrying out thorough and regular risk assessments
  - establishing systems to monitor the effectiveness of safeguarding measures
  - ensuring that adults receive up-to-date high quality training, guidance and support in safeguarding.
  
- Make the governing body effective, by:
  - ensuring it meets its statutory duties with regard to safeguarding and community cohesion
  - ensuring that governors have up-to-date training so they are in a position to challenge the school to address weaknesses and bring about improvements.
  
- Improve the effectiveness of leaders and managers, by:
  - setting up systems to drive school improvement
  - setting realistic but ambitious targets in order to ensure that pupils, especially average attainers, make good progress throughout the school
  - ensuring that teachers and teaching assistants receive continuing professional development
  - establishing systems to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the school's actions.