

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



22 March 2011

Mrs P Ainge
Acting Headteacher
English Martyrs Catholic Primary School
Dewsbury Road
Wakefield
West Yorkshire
WF2 9DD

Dear Mrs Ainge

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of English Martyrs Catholic Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 23 Mar 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please also pass on my thanks to the two members of the governing body, staff, the local authority representative and the group of pupils who gave up some of their lunchtime to meet with me.

There have been some changes to the school's context since the previous inspection in March 2010. The headteacher left the school in December 2010 and a new headteacher has been recruited and will take up the post in May 2011. Until that time one of the school's two assistant headteachers has the role of acting headteacher and the second has the role of acting deputy headteacher. There is currently an interim management team which includes the acting headteacher, acting deputy headteacher and the temporary head of the lower school. One teacher left the school in April 2010 and was replaced by a new teacher. One teacher has been absent on maternity leave and recently returned. One member of the teaching staff has had two periods of absence due to sickness and her class teaching responsibilities were covered by supply teachers. Two new governors have joined the governing body and in September 2010 and a new Chair of the Governing Body was elected.

As a result of the inspection on 3 and 4 March 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 has made satisfactory progress in making improvements and inadequate progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement

Attainment at the end of Year 2 declined to well below average in almost all subjects in 2009. Although there were some improvements in the 2010 results for Year 2 pupils in reading, their attainment overall was well below average, particularly in writing. At Key Stage 2, teacher assessments, moderated with other local schools, indicate that attainment in Year 6 at the end of 2010 was broadly average overall. For these pupils their progress

January 2011



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

was at the least satisfactory and for some was good. Inspection evidence and the school's own data indicate that attainment across the school is generally average and rates of progress, although variable still, are improving overall.

The teaching sampled ranged from good to satisfactory and none was inadequate, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Observations confirm that recent developments are having some impact on improving classroom practice. For example, a recently introduced format for planning lessons is ensuring that all lessons now have a clear focus and learning objectives are now shared with pupils. The use of 'steps to success' and 'remember rabbit' lists, are increasingly reminding pupils of the key features of a particular style of writing or how to tackle their tasks. However, these elements are not present in all lessons and some of the weaknesses identified by the last inspection have yet to be fully addressed. Although the pace of learning was brisk in some lessons and teachers modified their questions to engage and challenge individual pupils, on some occasions pupils spend too much time listening to their teachers and not enough time talking about their learning or completing tasks. Although teachers regularly review and assess pupils work, this information is still not always used to match work closely to pupils' needs. Additionally, opportunities are missed for teachers to clarify their expectations of pupils, particularly for the most able; for example in terms of how many sentences or problems need to be completed during the available time. The marking of pupils' work has improved and some good examples were observed in English and mathematics. However, there remain some inconsistencies in the detail that is provided to focus pupils on how to improve their work. Opportunities for pupils to apply their information and communication technology (ICT) skills in other subjects remain an area for development..

Although there is a school improvement plan which identifies some of the most important areas for improvement, it does not identify rigorous timescales, clear actions or personnel responsible for leading developments. Consequently, this makes it difficult for the senior leaders to plan monitoring and evaluation activities. A calendar of events, which include some monitoring activities, has been drawn up. However, there is not a coherent plan linked to the most important areas for development, and monitoring, including the few lesson observations that have taken place, has been ad hoc. Nevertheless, there have been some pockets of good work to monitor the impact of the school's actions. For example there has been some scrutiny of work and marking in both mathematics and English; a helpful report was generated, identifying whole-school successes and areas where further work was needed in mathematics. Although some lesson observations have been a major shortcoming that remains is the absence of rigorous arrangements to evaluate classroom practice, particularly the quality of learning.

There have been some successes in improving the arrangements for tracking the attainment and progress of pupils; all classes now have access to cohort tracking files, which include all records of pupils' previous and most recent assessments. Termly pupil progress review meetings have been introduced and, although this is a very recent development, staff state that their use is ensuring that pupils' progress is at the centre of their work. Staff state that they now feel responsible for the progress of pupils in their care. 'Provision mapping' has

been improved to ensure that every pupil who has not made the expected progress is targeted for additional help. Underperformance has been tackled and no inadequate teaching was seen during the inspection.

The work of senior leaders is inconsistent and some remain unclear about both short-term and long-term improvement priorities. For example there are development plans in place for mathematics but this is not the case for all subjects. Senior leaders have been aware for some time that there are inconsistencies in the quality of pupils' handwriting and that some work is poorly presented, particularly in literacy. However, there is not a plan in place to raise standards or improve practice in literacy across the school. Governors know and value the work of the school and are aware of where most improvement is needed. The use of the headteacher's report to governors is underdeveloped in terms of reporting on progress in bringing about improvements and on the findings from monitoring activities.

Although there has been improvement since the previous inspection, there remains much work to be done. Given the shortcomings that have been identified above, the inconsistent impact of the work of leaders along with recent and forthcoming staffing changes means that the school's proven capacity for improvement is no better than it was at the time of the previous inspection. Consequently, the progress that has been made in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement is inadequate. The school engages appropriately with the local authority, which has provided satisfactory challenge and support.

This visit included a check on the school's safeguarding procedures by scrutinising the single central record and found that all members of staff had been subjected to the appropriate checks. Training records for mandatory child protection training were reviewed and identified some minor issues for improvement. Consequently, the school is in the process of establishing a system to ensure that any staff who miss mandatory training or are newly recruited are trained in child protection as a matter of urgency.

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 Amraz Ali
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

Raise standards and accelerate progress in English, mathematics and science by improving the quality and consistency of teaching across the school by:

- ensuring that more-able pupils are consistently challenged
- accelerating the pace of learning in lessons
- using assessment more rigorously to meet the needs of all pupils
- ensuring that teachers' marking informs pupils of what they need to do next
- planning more opportunities for pupils to apply the skills taught in mathematics and information and communication technology to other subjects.

Improve the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning by:

- ensuring that lesson observations undertaken by senior leaders have a greater focus on the quality and scope of pupils' learning in lessons
- adopting a more rigorous approach to tackling weaknesses in teaching
- monitoring more rigorously the progress made by more-able pupils.