

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)



24 March 2011

Miss N Roth  
Headteacher  
Lilycroft Primary School  
Lilycroft Road  
Manningham  
Bradford  
West Yorkshire  
BD9 5AD

Dear Miss Roth,

### **Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Lilycroft Primary School**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 24 March 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. I also welcomed the opportunity to talk with other members of staff, pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and the School Improvement Partner. Please pass on my thanks to all those involved.

The school has recently faced some significant challenges as a result of long-term staff absence

As a result of the inspection on 5 and 6 October 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 good progress in making improvements and good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Most children start school in the Reception Year with skills and knowledge that are well below those typical for their age. School data show that in 2010 most children made good progress in Reception and in Key Stage 1 given their starting points. At the end of Key Stage 2 however, teacher assessments indicate that standards continued the decline reported in the 2009 inspection. Too few pupils reached the expected Level 4 in English and mathematics because they had made inadequate progress as a result of a legacy of poor teaching that is now being eradicated.

The school's most recent assessments show an improving picture. While some variation remains in different year groups, standards in English and mathematics are rising and the pace of learning has accelerated so that the progress pupils are currently making in lessons is at least satisfactory and often good. This is because the quality of teaching is improving as a result of extremely well-targeted actions and extensive development activities for staff

January 2011



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

that are carefully linked to the school's Raising Achievement Plan. Teaching observed during this visit was lively, exciting and actively engaged pupils in their learning. Whole-school initiatives introduced to drive improvement, such as Steps to Success, curricular targets and Working Walls for literacy and numeracy are being consistently applied throughout the school. This consistency provides a very secure scaffold for pupils who consequently have a very clear understanding of how these systems help them and include them in their learning. Strategies to track and assess attainment and progress are becoming much sharper. This ensures that pupils' learning is closely monitored and individual support can be put in place swiftly when needed. Teachers are using the school's more accurate data and assessment information well to plan lessons. Consequently, an increasing majority contain a range of activities that cater effectively for pupils' differing needs and abilities and provide greater challenge for the more able.

Teachers are becoming increasingly skilled at building activities that extend the pupils' speaking and literacy skills into all of their lessons. As a result there is a constant hum of productive chatter, through whole-group discussions or talk partners. Pupils listen well and contribute their views meaningfully. Similarly, there is now a real focus on helping pupils gain confidence in mathematics. For example, pupils are being encouraged to try different mathematical methods following a logical sequence of steps. Writing these steps down and then explaining them verbally to the class or their talk partner reinforces their literacy skills. In a Year 2 lesson, one pupil provided very clear definitions of a 'word problem' and a 'sum' and explained the differences between them.

Pupils' above average attendance and good behaviour make a strong contribution to their improving progress and achievements and demonstrate their increased enjoyment of school. Current safeguarding requirements are met. Pupils feel very safe and show affection and respect for teachers and each other. They thoroughly enjoy being involved in assessing their own and each other's learning and take this responsibility very seriously. Pupils are very clear about their curricular targets and report that the feedback they receive from teachers now provides clear guidance on how to improve their work. They confidently explained that the marking scheme that teachers and teaching assistants use is very clear because they use this to peer assess each other too.

The school has a significant number of teaching assistants who are now being deployed very effectively by the personalised learning manager. Activities, roles and responsibilities are in place and reviewed and revised as a team. Extensive training and development has increased teaching assistants' confidence in their own abilities and ensured that everyone is qualified to at least National Vocational Qualification Level 2. Senior leaders have been quick to spot the talents the different team members have and to nurture and develop these while listening to their ideas about how they feel their individual and collective skills can be used most effectively. As a result, teaching assistants feel fully included in whole-school planning and work closely alongside teachers to plan activities for the individual and small groups of pupils they are supporting and review their impact. Different support teams are emerging around phonics, English as an additional language, guided reading and Adacus, for example. There is a real sense of pride, achievement, fulfilment and belonging amongst what one

teaching assistant speaking for the majority rightly described as a 'strong self-supporting team'. This team now makes a good contribution to the accelerated progress pupils are beginning to make and supports their learning effectively.

The headteacher has driven improvement forward in challenging circumstances. She has worked determinedly to ensure that after a painful period, empathy and challenge have resulted in the emergence of productive relationships and a stronger sense of teamwork. Consistent systems and procedures are becoming firmly embedded as the 'Lilycroft Method' and place the emphasis of actions firmly on improved outcomes for pupils. Sharply focused plans with measurable success criteria now provide a strong framework for performance management. The governing body is increasingly holding school leaders to account and are playing a bigger part in the life of the school. Senior and middle leadership capacity has been enhanced and the literacy and numeracy coordinators have injected vigour and some exciting ideas. The leadership team has a much clearer picture of what needs to be done to improve outcomes for pupils further. Some good strategies have been introduced to involve parents and carers more in their children's learning and to celebrate their cultural heritage. There was 90% attendance at a recent parents' evening as a result. Support from the local authority has been good, effectively helping the headteacher to implement the actions needed to tackle the areas for improvement.

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 5-6 October 2009**

- Improve standards of English and mathematics by:
  - providing extra challenge and support for more able pupils
  - developing pupils' skills in problem solving and investigation in mathematics
  - providing more opportunities to develop pupils' skills in speaking and listening.
- Improve pupils' understanding of where and how to improve particular aspects of their work by:
  - sharing with pupils a small number of success criteria for a piece of work
  - helping them see which of these they are meeting and where further improvement is needed
  - ensuring greater consistency and focus in the use of oral and written feedback to pupils.
- Improve the deployment, training, effectiveness and impact on pupils' learning of teaching assistants.