

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



12 Apr 2011

Mrs P Adams
Headteacher
Crab Lane Primary School
Crab Lane
Higher Blackley
Manchester
Lancashire
M9 8NB

Dear Mrs Adams,

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Crab Lane Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 12 April 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided during the inspection.

Since the last inspection there have been five new appointments of newly qualified teachers. One of these is leaving at the end of this term. A new governing body has recently been formed to replace the Interim Executive Board. The headteacher is taking up the position of executive headteacher at another local school after Easter. This will occupy her time for half of each week for one term initially.

As a result of the inspection on 16 and 17 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 good progress in making improvements and good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Standards of attainment are now broadly in line with age-related expectations, both at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Results in the end of Key Stage 2 assessments in 2010 showed significant improvement when compared with the previous year. The proportion reaching the expected level in both English and mathematics improved markedly. The proportion reaching the higher Level 5 in English was above average. These results are the best the school has had for a number of years. However, the overall positive picture masks the fact that boys' attainment is below average in English. Standards in science also remain below average.

Data which take into account pupils' prior attainment and contextual factors show improving progress for all groups of pupils during Key Stage 2, and this includes both girls and boys, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those from minority ethnic groups.

January 2011



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Lesson observations confirm that rates of progress are now much better across the school. This improvement is the result of better provision, more effective use of assessment and the impact of strong strategic leadership and very effective day-to-day management.

Attendance has improved since the last inspection as a result of the dedicated work of the school. There was a substantial reduction in persistent absence in 2009-10. Reward strategies have helped to raise the profile of attendance amongst pupils and the benefits continue to be seen this year.

The teaching seen during the inspection showed considerable improvement on that reported at the last inspection. Consequently, progress in lessons is also better. This is helping pupils catch up on previous underachievement, although the legacy remains in upper Key Stage 2. Pupils have a positive rapport with their teachers and other adults and this fosters their good attitudes to learning. Their behaviour also makes a strong contribution to their learning, especially when they get the opportunity to collaborate together. In many lessons, there are opportunities for pupils to talk about their work in group discussions and talk-partner activities, although occasionally groups are a little too large. Teachers have increased their use of active learning strategies, and self and peer-assessment are clear features of many lessons, which are helping pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. Time is usually used very effectively so that the pace of learning is rapid, but occasionally in paired writing tasks one partner sits waiting while the other completes work. Target setting is consistent and challenging. Pupils know the targets they are aiming for, the progress they are making towards these and what they need to do to achieve them. Regular teacher assessments feed into the progress tracking system which enables interventions to be targeted carefully and successfully.

Leadership and management have been strengthened by the clear vision established by the headteacher with a strong focus on raising achievement. She is ably supported by a team of senior leaders who have an accurate picture and understanding of the school's strengths and its priorities for further improvement. The work of the English and mathematics subject leaders has developed well since the last inspection. They are fully involved in monitoring the work of the school and action plans are well focused. Science is at an earlier stage of development. Curriculum mapping has been carried out and an assessment system established so that better data are available about attainment and progress. Enjoyment of science was evident both in the lessons observed and from pupils' feedback.

Staff development since the last inspection, has been firmly directed at improving the quality of teaching, and coaching for newly qualified teachers is an important element of this. Strategies to improve boys' progress further are being developed through strategies, such as active learning and purchase of carefully selected reading materials.

The newly established governing body includes individuals with a range of skills, including expertise in education. It is well placed to build on the work of the Interim Executive Board given the strides already made by the school.

The local authority is no longer providing support to the school because it rightly judges that it is no longer needed.

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

Ruth James
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place on 16 and 17 March 2010.

- Improve the rate of progress made by pupils, especially in science and mathematics and particularly for boys, by:
 - continuing to develop the links between subjects so that pupils can make sense of their learning and use and develop their basic skills in every subject
 - improving the attendance rates of pupils
 - increasing the amount of good and better teaching.

- Increase the proportion and consistency of good and better teaching by:
 - making better use of assessment so that the learning expected of pupils in lessons builds effectively from what pupils already know and can do
 - improving the marking of pupils' work to provide feedback about how they can improve their work
 - raising the expectations of what pupils are expected to learn in a set time so that the pace of learning is increased
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to reflect on their work and to learn from each other through discussion.