

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 566939
Direct F 01695 729320
glaw@cfbt.com
www.cfbt-inspections.com



Wednesday 21 September 2011

Mr A Stygall
Headteacher
Morley Newlands Primary School
Wide Lane
Morley
Leeds
West Yorkshire
LS27 8PG

Dear Mr Stygall,

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Morley Newlands Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on Tuesday 20 September 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. I would also like to thank the representatives of the governing body for the discussion we had, and the pupils who I met who were welcoming and helpful. I appreciated the opportunity to speak with other members of the leadership and middle management teams.

With regards to staffing the school has experienced a reasonably stable period since the inspection. Three teachers have left. Of the three new appointments, two are newly-qualified teachers. However, the number of vulnerable pupils has increased considerably. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals has almost doubled. The building continues to deteriorate with some temporary classrooms having been condemned. The Nursery class has moved into new accommodation, and leaders have received notification that school is to be rebuilt and will expand to three form entry in 2013.

As a result of the inspection on Monday 25 January 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.

The 2011 national test results for 11-year-olds have seen an improvement in pupils' attainment. This is especially so in the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 in both English and mathematics. The gap between the attainment of boys and girls is narrowing. Leaders have identified the need to raise attainment in mathematics. Pupils' rate of progress is accelerating. With almost a year to go to the 2012 national tests, practically all pupils in the current Year 6 have already made the expected two levels of progress in English and mathematics over their time in Key Stage 2. Almost one-half of pupils have

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made three levels of progress. Pupils' attainment in writing is helped because teachers expect them to use their skills in other subjects. For example, pupils used a range of punctuation and grammar in religious education in their 'diary of a Buddhist child'. Similarly, pupils demonstrated a wide vocabulary and imaginative ideas in history in a newspaper report of the 'Victorian Underworld'. As a result of a revamped curriculum and far more practical activities, pupils' attainment in science is improving.

The quality of learning is improving because teachers provide far more opportunities for pupils to learn independently, to think creatively, and to evaluate and improve their work. This has improved pupils' attitude to learning. In each lesson, pupils consider the knowledge and skills they will acquire as they draw up 'steps to success', and review their progress against these at the end of the lesson. Teachers provide numerous opportunities for pupils to work as a member of a team, to communicate and to solve problems. Pupils learn from each other, for example, when researching the functions of the body's major organs in science. Others take a lead in learning, for example, when pupils in Year 6 organised the activities for a 'magical writing day'. Pupils are aware of their educational targets. However, teachers are inconsistent in marking to aid improvement. While some use 'tickled pink' and 'green for growth', others do not identify the next stage of learning to be made.

The senior leadership team is now well-established and improved management is evident in all areas of school. A culture of 'accountability' for all staff has developed. This is especially so in senior leaders' meetings with class teachers to discuss individual pupil progress. The focus on accurate assessment and in the use of data has been instrumental in raising attainment. A knowledgeable governing body supports the school and holds it to account. Plans are well-advanced for the leadership and management of the school during the new build.

The school has received good support from the local authority and from other schools, particularly from local high schools in the teaching of science, and the local authority Early Years Foundation Stage team in setting up of the new Nursery accommodation.

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

Mrs Katharine Halifax
Additional inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place Monday 25 January 2010

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning at Key Stage 2 by providing more opportunities for pupils to become independent learners and creative thinkers.
- Raise attainment in science.
- Ensure pupils make full and effective use of their writing skills in other subjects.