

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 566 937
Direct F 01695 729320
jsimmons@cfbt.com
www.cfbt-inspections.com



7 October 2011

Mrs Karen Briggs
Headteacher
Cobblers Lane Primary School
Cobblers Lane
Pontefract
West Yorkshire
WF8 2HN

Dear Mrs Briggs

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Cobblers Lane Primary School

Following my visit with Mrs Lyn Field, additional inspector, to your school on 5 and 6 October 2011, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

The inspection was the fourth monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place on 12 and 13 May 2010. The full list of the areas for improvement which were identified during that inspection is set out in the annex to this letter. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – satisfactory

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – satisfactory

Newly Qualified Teachers may be appointed.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be posted on the Ofsted website.

I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Wakefield.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Keeler
Her Majesty's Inspector

January 2011



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

- As a matter of urgency, ensure that all safeguarding requirements are fully met.
- Raise pupils' attainment and improve their progress and achievement in all subjects, but particularly in English, mathematics and science in Key Stage 2 by:
 - improving the quality of teaching so it is consistently good or better throughout the school
 - ensuring that pupils are fully aware of what they have to learn, are sufficiently challenged in their work and know what they need to do to improve it further
 - improving pupils' enjoyment of lessons and their skills of independent learning.
- Improve behaviour so that all pupils and staff are safe in school by enabling teachers consistently to manage pupils' behaviour successfully.
- Improve the quality and effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels by:
 - ensuring that all staff work together to achieve a shared vision for the school's success
 - implementing and monitoring the progress of a coherent development plan that is focused on improving the quality of teaching and learning and the outcomes for pupils
 - ensuring that the governing body holds the leadership team fully to account for its work and meets all its statutory responsibilities.
- Improve attendance by reversing the current decline and ensuring that all pupils attend regularly.

Special measures: monitoring of Cobblers Lane Primary School

Report from the fourth monitoring inspection from 5 October to Thursday 6 October 2011

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, senior leaders, staff, a group of pupils, the School Improvement Partner and the Chair of the Interim Executive Board (IEB).

Context

The substantive headteacher at the time of the previous inspection has left the school. Since September 2010, the school has been led by three temporary headteachers. A permanent headteacher took up her position at the beginning of the autumn term 2011.

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning

Attainment is low and progress, while improving, remains inadequate. Attainment and the rate at which pupils make progress have declined rapidly over the past three years. This was because of an inability to manage pupils' behaviour effectively which, in turn, affected learning adversely. As a result, many pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2 have gaps in skills, knowledge and understanding. This was reflected in the unvalidated results of pupils in the end of Year 6 national tests in 2011. Of particular concern was pupils' performance in mathematics which was significantly below national expectations. However, the proportion of pupils attaining age-related expectations at the end of Year 6 in English increased, bringing to an end a declining profile since 2008. Furthermore, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected standard in both English and mathematics is now higher than when the school was judged to require special measures. An analysis of school-held data indicates that pupils currently in Year 6 are well placed to achieve higher than the previous cohort. Pupils are beginning to make better progress than they have in the past because the quality of teaching is improving. Pupils spoken to during the inspection were adamant that they enjoy school and talked positively about their learning experiences. However, pupils' current rate of progress is still not yet good enough to rapidly close the attainment gap with the standards achieved nationally.

Other relevant pupil outcomes

The behaviour of pupils and their attitudes to learning have improved significantly since the time of the previous inspection and these are a major reason why pupils are beginning to make better progress. High standards of behaviour have been established and pupils know what is expected of them in lessons and as they move around the school. Pupils particularly appreciate the provision of play equipment at lunchtime which not only enables them to

have fun but also supports their social development. Good behaviour and effort are rewarded and pupils are rightly proud of their achievements. As a result, pupils' self-confidence and esteem are rising. Attendance has continued to improve since the previous inspection and is currently in line with the national average. The school has introduced a number of strategies to promote good attendance and some classes now exceed the national average on a regular basis.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on the areas for improvement:

- improve behaviour so that all pupils and staff are safe in school by enabling teachers consistently to manage pupils' behaviour successfully – good
- improve attendance by reversing the current declining trend and ensuring that all pupils attend regularly – good.

The effectiveness of provision

The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection, although it varies across the school. In all classrooms, the relationship between teachers and pupils has improved and this underpins a constructive climate for learning. Pupils make better progress when teachers use assessment effectively in order to identify gaps in their skills and knowledge and plan lessons accordingly. This is not evident in all classes and this inability to cater effectively for the learning needs of all pupils inhibits progress and on occasions leads to pupils becoming restless and inattentive. However, since the previous inspection teachers manage behaviour better, engage their pupils more through targeted questioning and provide more opportunities for pupils to work independently. The quality of marking has improved but varies in quality across the school. Furthermore, there is limited evidence of pupils reflecting on teachers' comments and consciously taking action to improve aspects of their work. In many classes pupils do not have a clear understanding of their targets or what they must do in order to improve. Where pupils do have targets they tend to be long term instead of focusing on what to do next as they refine and practice their skills.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on the areas for improvement:

- Raise pupils' achievement and improve their progress and achievement in all subjects, but particularly in English, mathematics and science in Key Stage 2 by improving the quality of teaching so it is consistently good or better throughout the school – satisfactory.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The current headteacher has only been in post since the beginning of September 2011. The three leaders since the previous inspection all made a significant contribution to the development of the school. However, the appointment of a substantive headteacher has provided an opportunity for the school to look forward to a period of consistency and consolidation while at the same time addressing the areas requiring improvement with

renewed rigour. The headteacher has a clear understanding of what needs to be done in order to take the school forward and is in the process of refining the school improvement plan to ensure that a range of initiatives are pursued and monitored effectively. The influence and impact of subject leaders on provision and pupils' progress throughout the school are insufficiently developed. The identification of gaps in pupils' skills and knowledge and actions designed to improve them has not materialised quickly enough and this is limiting the drive to raise attainment and accelerate progress.

The IEB monitors the work of the school well and through the Chair has a very good understanding of the challenges that remain. The IEB has struck a good balance between providing support and holding the school to account and this is proving to be a significant contribution to its ongoing development.

The single central record meets requirements. Pupils no longer feel unsafe and enjoy school as a result of the school's work to improve behaviour.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on areas for improvement:

- Improve the quality and effectiveness of leadership at all levels – satisfactory
- As a matter of urgency, ensure that all safeguarding requirements are fully met – good.

External support

A new School Improvement Partner has been appointed to the school as from the beginning of the autumn term 2011. Plans are in place to offer the school support in relation to developing the skills and improving the impact of subject leaders. At this time it is too early to judge the impact of this intervention.