

CfBT Inspection Services
Suite 22
West Lancs Investment Centre
Maple View
Skelmersdale
WN8 9TG

T 0300 1231231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct T 01695 566862
Direct F 01695 729320
Direct email:
rcowley@cfbt.com



3 November 2011

Mrs L Kavanagh
Headteacher
Healey Junior Infant and Nursery School
Healey Lane
Batley
West Yorkshire
WF17 8BN

Dear Mrs Kavanagh

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Healey Junior Infant and Nursery School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on Wednesday 2 November 2011 and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. I would be grateful if you pass on my thanks to the governors, the School Improvement Adviser and the pupils I spoke to. They were forthright and very helpful.

Since the last inspection the school has suffered significant turbulence in staffing, especially at a senior level. Three acting headteachers joined and left the school before a permanent headteacher was appointed less than nine months ago. A senior leader has recently been ill but has now returned to work. The special educational needs coordinator who is also the ethnic minority achievement coordinator remains absent. One teacher has retired and another teacher whose temporary contract came to an end has left the school. A supply teacher is covering the absence of the special educational needs coordinator. The school building and some outdoor areas have been reorganised and refurbished.

As a result of the inspection on 21 and 22 April 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 inadequate progress in making improvements and inadequate progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Pupils' attainment remains low and the rapid and secure learning and progress witnessed in Key Stages 1 and 2 at the time of the previous inspection have not been sustained. This is exemplified by the school in 2011 failing to meet the government's minimum floor standards for pupils' attainment and progression in English and mathematics combined by the end of Key Stage 2. Several of the school's largest groups of pupils did much less well than their counterparts do nationally in English. Encouragingly, outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage continue to improve. From low starting points on entry to the

September 2011



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Nursery, children attain skills and dispositions that are near to age-related expectations by the time they join Year 1.

The latest school data show pupils' progress varies within year groups and across subjects. There is some accelerated progress, but also examples of regression and slow progress. Booster classes, formal writing twice a day, more sharply focused in-class support, and a skills-based approach to learning are being used to try and regain the lost ground in pupils' knowledge and understanding.

Pupils' attendance has risen sharply recently in response to a high profile campaign among pupils to promote good attendance and raise parents' awareness of the damage regular absence can have on their children's education. The school knows these gains must be sustained long term. Pupils' behaviour during the inspection did not cause the inspector concern.

Overall, staff are enthusiastic, have good subject knowledge and manage their classes without issue. However, the joint scrutiny of every year group that the inspector and headteacher conducted revealed a mixed picture. It was clear that there is insufficient good or better teaching to enable pupils to quickly narrow the significant deficit attainment and progress gaps that currently exist. In the most effective sessions, pupils clearly enjoyed the problem-solving, active learning and really being stretched intellectually. This was counter-balanced by sessions where a lack of precision in planning and delivery meant that work was not well matched to individual pupils' needs, or pupils did not fully understand what was expected of them. Consequently, their concentration wavered and the volume and quality of work they produced was limited. A review of pupils' books revealed inconsistencies in the quality of teachers' marking and feedback and the reinforcement of high expectations for pupils' handwriting, grammar and punctuation. Early Years Foundation Stage provision offers children a range of stimulating and demanding learning experiences, indoors and outdoors. There is a good balance between direct teaching, guided learning and child-initiated activities.

Curriculum provision focuses on teaching through a series of themes such as 'the Ocean' and drawing on subjects like history, English, geography, art, science, and information and communication technology in a more integrated way. Pupils report great satisfaction with this approach which they find interesting and fun. This has been supplemented with an enhanced range of visits and visitors to further broaden pupils' horizons.

The new headteacher has brought an urgency and realism to the school. Together with some capable leaders she has set about strategically and systematically tackling the root causes of the schools continued underperformance. This has included: holding staff more to account; rationalising some roles and responsibilities; refining approaches to teaching and learning and the curriculum; and remodelling procedures for behaviour management and assessment. These new strategies were underpinned by external and in-house training and regular and robust monitoring and evaluation to gauge their impact. A momentum is being generated, together with a shift in culture which is improving the conditions for learning.

However, 19 months have elapsed since the last section 5 inspection and the school has not tellingly raised standards or improved pupils' learning and progress. In the final analysis and despite the recent concerted efforts of new leaders, the school has not demonstrated a better capacity for sustained improvement, particularly when set against the picture painted of the school in April 2010. The school is not improving fast or securely enough. Middle leaders are not impacting effectively enough in raising pupils' achievement.

Some positive steps have been taken to address the identified deficiencies in governance. There has been training to enable them to better understand performance data and the key improvement issues. A more coherent committee structure is now in place which is enabling governors to apply their own expertise more confidently in finance, education, human resource management, healthy and safety, and community development to robustly challenge and support the school to improve. While members of the governing body are more informed and are taking a more active role in evaluating the school's effectiveness, their impact in driving improvement to date, given the time that has elapsed has been limited.

The school has had various interventions from the local authority to help tackle identified shortcomings and support the school's further development. This has included collaboration with a National Leader of Education from a high performing school and training, advice and guidance from local authority advisers and consultants. However, these ongoing interventions have not yet delivered the improved performance necessary.

This monitoring inspection included a check on the school's safeguarding procedures which met current requirements. Certain aspects of good practice are not adopted, such as updating criminal record bureau checks of staff every three years.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

John Young
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- Raise standards of attainment and accelerate pupils' progress, particularly in English by:
 - ensuring teaching is consistently good throughout the school
 - ensuring lessons are challenging and that they meet the needs of all groups of learners, particularly higher attaining pupils and those who speak English as an additional language
 - making good use of assessment in teachers' planning to ensure that learning activities build on pupils' previous knowledge and skills
 - involving support staff fully in supporting pupils in all parts of lessons, including when the teacher is teaching the whole class and in the plenary
 - engaging all groups of pupils, such as boys and those for whom English is an additional language, in activities which develop their speaking and listening skills.

- Increase the effectiveness of leadership and management, including governance by:
 - making better use of data and information on pupils' progress to set suitably challenging targets and expectations for individuals and groups
 - ensuring that the governors hold the school to account through asking challenging questions and have a clear understanding of data and the key improvement issues
 - embedding regular and rigorous monitoring which holds teachers to account for the progress made by pupils.