

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



8 March 2012

Mrs B Mayer
Headteacher
Beckermets CofE School
Mill Lane
Beckermets
Cumbria
CA21 2YD

Dear Mrs Mayer

Notice to improve: monitoring inspection of Beckermets CofE School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 7 March 2012, and for the information which you provided during the inspection. Please extend my thanks to the local authority representative, members of the governing body, staff and pupils who met with me.

As a result of the inspection on 14 July 2011, 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 is making good progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the pupils' achievement.

The issue which gave rise to the notice to improve related to the effectiveness of the governing body in ensuring appropriate arrangements are in place to secure a safe learning environment. This issue has been fully addressed. Members of the governing body and school leaders have established thorough systems to review all aspects of health and safety based on rigorous monitoring and comprehensive action planning. They quickly established a health and safety committee to oversee developments and implement a regular monitoring programme. They have undertaken a detailed audit to ensure best practice is promoted. Policies have been updated and signed by all staff and thorough risk assessments have been undertaken where appropriate. Procedures to ensure the safe recruitment of staff and other adults working in the school meet all requirements. Staff and the governing body have undertaken relevant training to support their roles in safeguarding.

Appropriate measures have been taken to ensure the school site is safe. The school has invested in many improvements to the site and there are stringent measures to ensure pupils' safety both indoors and outdoors. Staff are vigilant and caring in all aspects of their work. Pupils behave sensibly and with consideration for each other. Their friendly and respectful attitudes help all to feel safe. Their enthusiastic approach and positive attitudes to learning also make a strong contribution to their achievement.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Children have varying pre-school experience and skills when they start in the Reception class. The previous inspection judged teaching and achievement to be good overall. It found that pupils make good progress from their starting points to attain above average standards by the time they leave at the end of Year 6. This continues to be the case for pupils of all ability, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Pupils' consistent progress in reading and mathematics is supported by effective, systematic teaching of mathematical and reading skills across the whole school. Pupils' progress in writing is slower, particularly by boys. Although pupils have a wide vocabulary and imaginative approach to writing, their presentation and layout of written work is too variable.

The previous inspection recommended that the best practice in teaching, assessment and marking should be shared in order to increase the proportion of outstanding practice and promote consistent approaches. School leaders have started to address this issue although some actions are at early stages, as they have rightly focused on the more significant improvements that were required to ensure the safety and security of the school site.

The headteacher has worked with Key Stage 2 staff to ensure consistency in planning and assessment. The introduction of clear success criteria for pupils' work provides effective guidelines for teachers and helps pupils to assess their learning. Marking and feedback is more consistent following professional development and support from the local authority General Adviser. The teaching of writing is the school's main priority for further improvement, with a particular focus on using inspiring approaches to motivate boys. Staff have attended training and the school is developing links with other schools with the intention of sharing best practice.

The local authority statement of action following the school's notice to improve is fit for purpose and has been implemented to time. The School Specific Monitoring Group has provided good advice and guidance relating to the safety of the school site. It has been supported by detailed audit and action planning in collaboration with external consultants. The school has received good support from the General Adviser and governor services to develop the governing body's role in monitoring and develop best practice in teaching.

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

Jean Kendall
Her Majesty's Inspector



Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in July 2011

- Ensure that the governing body fulfils all statutory responsibilities in providing a safe learning environment and safe working practices meet safeguarding requirements and recommendations in full by:
 - ensuring, as matter of urgency, that pupils are safe on the school site
 - making certain that all health and safety requirements for equipment and services are met fully
 - ensuring that the senior leaders have a much greater impact on school effectiveness by increasing the rigour of their quality assurance systems to monitor the site and risk assessment routines.

- Continue to accelerate the rate of pupils' progress and improve their achievement, especially in Years 3 and 4 by:
 - making use of and building upon the effective and inspiring practice that already exists in the school, and increasing the proportion of teaching that is outstanding
 - providing more activities that use thought-provoking approaches that inspire pupils
 - ensuring that teachers are consistent in providing pupils with written feedback and well-defined steps for further improvement.

