

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

T 0300 123 1231  
Text Phone: 0161 618 8524  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

**Direct T** 01695 566868  
**Direct F** 01695 729320  
**Direct email:** pnuttie@cfbt.com



18 June 2013

Mr Brian McGregor  
Headteacher  
Woodchurch CofE Primary School  
Church Lane  
Woodchurch  
Wirral  
Merseyside  
CH49 7LS

Dear Mr McGregor

**Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Woodchurch CofE Primary School, Wirral**

Following my visit to your school on 17 June 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on the findings of my visit. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in April 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

**Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you, other senior leaders, the Chair and representatives of the Governing Body and of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school's action plan was evaluated. A range of documentation was scrutinised, for example the school's records related to checking the quality of teaching, pupils' achievement and performance management. In addition, a small sample of pupils' written work was seen.

**Context**

There have been no significant changes since the last inspection that judged the school to require improvement.

## **Main findings**

The school's action plan for tackling the areas for improvement from the last inspection is well focused on the impact of proposed actions on pupils' achievement. Overall the school's planning shows the capacity to drive improvement at an appropriate pace up to the next Section 5 inspection. Nevertheless, some targets need to be sharpened still further, with clearer timescales and measures of success, to ensure that some groups and individual pupils who were under-achieving at the time of the last inspection make the fastest progress they can.

Systems for checking on teaching, pupils' progress and for performance management are rigorous and the school has already taken some robust steps to improve teaching further. This includes some staffing changes to ensure that teachers and leaders occupy roles in which they are most effective. Early signs of improvement in pupils' achievement, for example in mathematics and writing, are beginning to show in the latest assessment information held by the school.

There has been some training for teachers, to improve the quality of teaching and learning, through the school's partnership with a school that has made the journey to good and through the local authority. Subject leaders have had training in subject leadership and the improvement of teaching in their subject. They and senior leaders now show clear understanding of the characteristics of teaching and learning needed to ensure that the school becomes good. Nevertheless the school is aware of some inconsistency in the quality of marking and feedback to pupils. Feedback to teachers on their teaching is generally clear and linked to the Teaching Standards and to appropriate professional development. The school is trialling various models for the further sharpening of such feedback.

Governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses well and are committed to the school's improvement. Governors are now using assessment information independently and proactively to ensure that the school moves forward quickly. However, they are aware of the need to improve their practice further.

The pupil premium funding (additional funding allocated for students known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after by the local authority, or members of service families) is wisely spent. Its impact is seen in the fact that pupils known to be eligible for free school meals achieve at least as well as other pupils in the school.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- further strengthen its action plan to ensure that all actions have readily measurable targets and timescales, to focus more sharply on previously underachieving groups of pupils and individuals.
- ensure teachers and teaching assistants have enough opportunities to plan together and share across key stages the good practice already present in the school.
- ensure that all teachers give clear and helpful feedback to pupils and check regularly that their guidance is followed up by pupils.
- intensify support for subject leaders in holding underperforming teachers to account.
- undertake a review of the governing body as soon as possible to ensure that all governors can discharge their responsibilities in holding the school to account as effectively as possible.
- continue to work with the local authority to ensure the school improves and provides a good education for all its pupils before the next full inspection in around 18 months' time.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

### **External support**

The local authority has been quick to provide intensive, well - structured support and training to challenge the school to improve further. This is already beginning to bear fruit. For example, the school has made good use of contact, brokered by the local authority, with another local school that has improved to good, to ensure that teachers have a clear understanding of the characteristics of good and outstanding teaching. The local authority has also provided subject and leadership training for those in charge of subjects and this has begun to improve their capacity to challenge underperforming colleagues

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Wirral and as below.

Yours sincerely

Susan Wareing  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**