

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



12 July 2013

Mrs Adele Lupton
Acting Headteacher
Our Lady's Catholic Primary School
Watkin Street
Fenton
Stoke-on-Trent
Staffordshire
ST4 4NP

Dear Mrs Lupton

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Our Lady's Catholic Primary School, Stoke-On-Trent

Following my visit to your school on 11 July 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, the headteacher designate, representatives from the governing body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school improvement plan was evaluated, a number of short visits to lessons were made and school documentation was examined.

Context

Since the last inspection, four class teachers are leaving at the end of the term and three teachers have been appointed. A new headteacher has been appointed for September. Two learning assistants have been appointed and one new governor has joined the governing body.

Main findings

You are working closely with the headteacher designate who has been appointed to the school for September and plans have been written to show how the school will improve. Significant links have been made with local schools in the Multi-Academy Company and this is providing highly effective support. The local leader of education is working closely with you and the leaders in school to provide much needed support to help secure improvement. Governors are positive and feel the school is moving forward.

There are significant changes in staffing for September. Over 80% of the teachers are either new to the school or will be teaching in a new year group. While this provides significant instability, staff are regarding this as a positive fresh start and a way to move the school to good. The Ofsted report noted concerns in Key Stage 2 but changes in staffing are designed to provide greater consistency across the school with regards to teaching and learning. There is a new action plan which is focused on the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. The plan lists activities that will support school improvement. However, there is insufficient detail to show how leaders will monitor and evaluate the success of the plan. You and the headteacher designate are developing a new staffing structure that will better meet the needs of the school. Roles and responsibilities are being reviewed, leading to a greater clarity about what is expected from all staff. Leaders have pro-actively developed strategies in response to the Ofsted report. For example, a range of strategies have been developed in Year 5 to provide pupils with interventions to help them catch up with their learning. You have worked hard to keep parents informed of changes and held meetings to ensure they are updated with regards to who will be teaching their child in the new academic year.

The local leader of education has carried out a useful and informative teaching and learning review. Part of this process was to check school leaders' judgements about the quality of teaching and learning. You and the headteacher designate are well aware of the need to ensure a greater consistency across the school. You are developing policies and procedures to ensure the consistent approach, for example, a new teaching and learning policy is currently being developed. A new monitoring and evaluation cycle has been written which clearly indicates what monitoring will take place. It is intended that this will better hold staff to account.

Through the teaching and learning review all teachers received specific feedback from lesson observations on strengths and areas to improve. This has resulted in more specific plans to tailor individualised training for all staff members. This will link to performance management procedures next term, but interim arrangements have been made for this term. The new system will take effect from September and will make better use of standards expected for teaching staff. Teaching assistants have been redeployed to better support pupils who require support. As a result, pupils are receiving more help which is better meeting their individual needs.

Middle leaders are currently not impacting enough on their subject areas. This is due to a lack of training in the past, but also because of changes in staffing for next term. Leaders acknowledge more needs to be done to support them in moving forward and plans are in place for them to work with effective leaders in the link school.

Attendance has improved but leaders acknowledge it still is too low. A home school support link worker will work with the school in September to improve rates of attendance.

Governors are committed to provide support and challenge to ensure the school rapidly improves. The standards and provision committee plans to challenge the school on how they are improving in the areas identified by Ofsted. At the present time this committee is not meeting regularly enough. Governors have completed a skills audit, which is being used to formulate committee membership. Governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school because of the detailed reviews that are carried out. Currently, governors are not doing enough to ensure the pupil premium funding, which is extra funding given to schools by the government to support children of armed forces families, pupils who are looked after by the local authority and pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, is used effectively enough. Nor are they fulfilling their statutory duties with the recording of pupil premium funding.

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:

- ensure the school action plan contains rigorous evaluation procedures
- develop ways to monitor the impact of pupil premium funding and ensure governors hold you to account for how it is spent
- ensure governors hold regular meetings to hold leaders to account for the progress of actions requiring improvement
- develop the role of middle leaders.

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

Staff at the school are supported by schools in the Multi-Academy Company to help them improve. This includes observing good and outstanding practice, developing subject leaders and engaging in a programme to improve teaching. A range of external partners are working with the school which provides an external view of the school's performance. The local authority regularly visits the school to review progress against areas identified for improvement. The reviews focused on teaching and learning and leadership and management have ensured governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The local authority has moderated the school's assessments to ensure they are accurate.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Stoke-On-Trent.

Yours sincerely

Jane Millward

Her Majesty's Inspector