

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 566 857
Direct F 01695 729320
Direct email:
jkinsman@cfbt.com



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Mrs Ilona Sanderson
Headteacher
Edenthorpe Hall Primary School
The Drive
Edenthorpe
Doncaster
South Yorkshire
DN3 2LS

Dear Mrs Sanderson

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Edenthorpe Hall Primary School, Doncaster

Following my visit to your school on 18 September 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 June 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

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:

- Extend the use of individual development plans to all teachers
- Improve the use of the headteacher's termly reports to governors so that they include more information about progress with planned improvements, including information about senior leaders' evaluations of the quality of teaching.
- Ensure that governors receive the headteacher's termly report at least 5 days before the termly meeting.
- Ensure that, following the completion of the review of governance, a plan of training is drawn up to improve the skills and knowledge of all governors.
- Review the role of link governors so that governors are clear about their role in challenging and supporting school leaders. Ensure that governors holding these roles are not members of the leadership team.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher, seven members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. Almost all classrooms were visited. The school improvement plans were evaluated along with other school documentation including records from lesson observations.

Context

Since the inspection in June 2013 a temporary teacher has left and a teacher has returned from maternity leave. A new teacher has joined the school. Four of the class teachers are on temporary fixed term contracts; two covering maternity leave, one recruited in response to an increase in numbers in Key Stage 1 and one to enhance the staffing in Key Stage 2. An assistant headteacher has been recruited from within the school and this role began in September 2013.

Main findings

Plans to deal with the issues identified as requiring improvement are very detailed. Consequently, work has begun in earnest. For example, all staff received training on what makes an effective lesson and leads to good learning and progress over time. Lesson planning has been improved and is beginning to identify a wider range of classroom strategies to engage pupils actively in learning. For example, more opportunities to undertake short tasks, engage in discussions and spending less time listening to teachers. The timing of assessments have been improved so that class teachers can identify where pupils are not making expected progress and therefore change how they help these particular pupils. More rigorous monitoring means that teachers whose work has been identified as requiring improvement are receiving good guidance and support. Each has a personalised support plan which focuses appropriately on helping them to improve the quality of their teaching. However, this is not in place for all teachers. A particular challenge for the school is securing more consistently good teaching and progress in the context of some on-going changes in staffing as teachers return from maternity leave or change to or from part-time working. The headteacher provides governors with a range of useful information. However, the headteacher's termly report to governors does not include information about progress with improvements or information from classroom observations. Governors do not routinely receive the termly reports before the meetings which limit their ability to challenge senior leaders.

A review of governance has begun but has yet to make recommendations. While some governors accept that their own skills and knowledge need to be improved there is some reluctance on the part of a small number of governors to accept that significant aspects of the school's work require improvement. The most positive feature of the work of governors has been the formation of a school improvement committee which has a clearly defined role in evaluating the impact of the school development plan. Some governors have roles allocated such as mathematics or literacy 'link' governors. The role of literacy governor is held by the teacher governor, who is also one of the literacy coordinators. This means that, in effect, she is charged with challenging herself. Governors should be clear about the role of such link governors in challenging and supporting school leaders. If they are to continue this useful practice of link governors, they should identify a governor who is not involved in the leadership of literacy to undertake this role

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 school's engagement with the local authority is good. The local authority has responded positively and promptly following the previous inspection. For example, the local authority officer has been instrumental in establishing a partnership with a better performing school and establishing the governors' school improvement committee.

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

Yours sincerely

Amraz Ali

Her Majesty's Inspector