

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

**Direct T** 01695 566855  
**Direct F** 01695 729320  
**Direct email:**  
gail.hill@cfbt.com



25 November 2013

Mrs Joan Hobbs  
Headteacher  
Dubmire Primary  
Britannia Terrace  
Fence Houses  
Houghton le Spring  
Tyne and Wear  
DH4 6HL

Dear Mrs Hobbs

**Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Dubmire Primary, Sunderland**

Following my visit to your school on 22 November 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 September 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:

- make sure that there are measurable targets for the attainment of all groups of pupils in the school improvement plan, that targets for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals are even more challenging and that success criteria can be measured more precisely
- ensure that pupils understand clearly when they have met their individual learning targets and know what they have to do next to improve
- make sure that all pupils have regular opportunities to edit and improve their writing.

**Evidence**

During my visit, I held meetings with you, other senior and subject leaders, pupils, members of the governing body, the Education Development Partner and a senior representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I evaluated the school improvement plan and looked at samples of pupils' work and a range of documents

including minutes of governing body meetings and the outcomes of monitoring activities. You accompanied me on a tour of the school.

## **Context**

There have been no significant changes to staffing or the governing body since the school's last inspection.

## **Main findings**

You and other school leaders have taken prompt action to address the issues identified in the last inspection report and you have revised the school improvement plan to include these areas. There are criteria and milestones identified in the plan by which senior leaders and governors can measure success, particularly in the improvement of pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching. However, these should be refined further so that progress on the school's journey to 'good' can be measured more precisely against these criteria. In addition, expectations for the attainment of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals are not as challenging as they should be and not all groups of pupils such as girls, boys, more-able pupils and disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are included in these milestones.

Evidence seen during the visit shows that the school has already begun to tackle some key issues identified in the school improvement plan. Through pupil progress meetings which are held on a half-termly basis, leaders have identified those children who are underachieving and have ensured specific work has been provided for them to help them improve. The minutes of these meetings show that the discussions held are more tightly focused on the expectations of pupils' progress and all school leaders are now involved in leading these meetings and holding staff to account. Senior and subject leaders are now engaged in scrutinising pupils' work and teacher's planning on a weekly basis. Records of feedback to staff show that teachers are given pointers for improvement. These are followed up the next week to see if they have been implemented effectively. This is helping staff to plan more carefully for individuals and groups of pupils in order to meet their learning needs more closely. Leaders have also reviewed the marking and feedback policy and regular scrutiny of pupils' work identifies clearly those staff who need additional support to improve this aspect of their work. This is then provided by leaders through coaching and mentoring strategies. There are some examples of effective marking where pupils are given opportunities to edit and improve their writing. However, this is not consistent across all classes in the school. Pupils have individual learning targets in their books; however, it is not always clear when pupils have achieved their targets nor are they given opportunities to identify for themselves where their targets have been met.

The school's governors are very supportive of the work of the school and are challenging it to improve. They have received training on how to evaluate school data and evidence shows they are now asking more challenging questions about the progress that pupils are making. Governors are now gathering first-hand evidence of school practice by for example, visiting classrooms, meeting with subject and other leaders to discuss their work and through activities such as coming in to hear pupils read. There are now governor committees focusing on tracking progress in literacy and mathematics. These activities are enabling governors to better hold leaders to account for the school's performance.

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 Senior School Improvement Officer reviews the work of the school on a half-termly basis and challenges it to improve. The local authority has provided effective support from consultants, which is helping to improve provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The Education Development Partner visits the school on a regular basis to provide bespoke support for school leaders to improve their skills in monitoring and evaluating the work in their areas of responsibility and has brokered additional support from a local leader of education at Finchale Primary School to share effective practice. He has provided training for governors in understanding school data. This has been effective and valued by governors.

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

Yours sincerely

Christine Inkster

**Her Majesty's Inspector**