

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 566939  
**Direct F** 01695 729320  
**Direct email:** glaw@cfbt.com



14 January 2014

Miss Paula Holden  
Headteacher  
St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School  
Eastend  
Wigton  
Cumbria  
CA7 9HZ

Dear Miss Holden

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School, Cumbria**

Following my visit to your school on 13 January 2014, 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 October 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:

- introduce greater urgency to the action plan by including short-term checks to encourage the pace of improvement
- engage with good and outstanding schools to observe good and better teaching practice to enable the quality of teaching and learning to develop at a faster pace
- ensure teachers are fully involved in the monitoring and review processes to encourage greater consistency across the school.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, I met with you, other school leaders, pupils, the Chair and four members of the Governing Body and the general school advisor from the local authority, to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I evaluated the school action plans and the monitoring of progress made since the previous inspection. I met with six pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6 to talk about recent changes in the school and look at examples of their work. You and I visited each classroom to meet pupils and staff and look at the improvements to teaching put in place since the last inspection.

## **Main findings**

You, the governors and staff are determined to ensure the school is good. The action plan includes all of the areas for improvement identified in the recent inspection and there are fortnightly monitoring meetings run by senior leaders, governors and the general advisor, to review progress. However, the plan does not include enough short-term targets to promote faster progress and for senior leaders and the governing body to monitor the effectiveness of the actions.

In order to improve the quality of teaching you have completed joint observations with the local authority advisor and some peer observations have also been completed. However, teachers do not share findings with each other sufficiently, or see enough good practice elsewhere. Training has taken place to ensure that teachers match tasks to the ability levels of pupils and also to stretch pupils, although there is still work to be done in this area.

Subject leaders and teachers have become more confident with the new progress tracking system. Regular progress meetings occur so teachers know the levels and targets for each pupil and track those pupils who are not making expected progress so that appropriate intervention is put in place. Pupils' progress has improved since the last inspection as a result of teachers' raised awareness and monitoring activities. Mental maths activities occur for ten minutes every afternoon, in addition to their maths lessons, and pupils say they enjoy these and are becoming quicker with their answers. Classroom sets of challenges have been developed to help pupils apply and transfer skills, and maths timetable books have been produced to support homework and motivate pupils. However, these changes have been made primarily to support mathematics. Challenges are not evident in all subjects and there is a lack of consistency across the school to provide opportunities for pupils' to deepen their understanding of the links between subjects and encourage literacy and numeracy across the curriculum.

You have reorganised the timetables of teaching assistants so that pupils who need extra support get additional time every day. Teaching assistants have specific tasks to complete with pupils and have received additional training. The pupils I talked to said that the teaching assistants were really helpful in class. The pupils really appreciate the support given by the teachers and the only area they said they want improving are the sports facilities.

You have visited an outstanding school in the area and set up support links and other visits by teachers are planned. The Governing Body has worked with the local authority to arrange support and a review of governance is due to start at the end of this month. Meanwhile the governors have arranged training to help them improve their knowledge and have linked with another governing body to share knowledge of effective governance. The governing body is keen to challenge and support the school further and raise their profile with parents, pupils and the community through the school website and their involvement in the school.

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 is making good use of the local authority link general advisor to help monitor the progress of the action plan. She attends the monitoring committee meetings and visits each term to offer support with the analysis of performance data and the quality of teaching and learning. The local authority has brokered support from good schools and has confidence in the school's capacity to improve.

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

Yours sincerely

Christina McIntosh

## **Her Majesty's Inspector**

The letter should be copied to the following:

- Chair of the Governing Body
- Local authority
- Diocese – for voluntary aided schools (Lancaster)