

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

T 0300 123 1231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

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



14 January 2014

Mrs Sheila Storey
Headteacher
Whinmoor St Paul's Church of England Primary School
Whinmoor Crescent
Seacroft
Leeds
West Yorkshire
LS14 1EG

Dear Mrs Storey

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Whinmoor St Paul's Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 14 January 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the findings. 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:

- review the marking and feedback policy to ensure consistency in the application of the policy throughout school.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, pupils, the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school action plans were evaluated. We visited lessons and looked at pupils' work. I scrutinised documentation such as the marking and feedback policies, monitoring records and performance management information.

Context

There are no contextual changes since the last inspection.

Main findings

The headteacher has focused very quickly on improving the quality of teaching and has left no stone unturned in finding out precisely what each teacher needs to do to improve. Improvements in teaching have been made quickly, because the headteacher has set some teachers specific, short term targets and made rigorous checks on the progress with these and identified 'next steps'. Middle leaders are supporting this work.

The headteacher agreed and recognised that the school's data systems were not fit for purpose. She has addressed this swiftly by finding out what systems other schools use. A new system has been installed which ensures pupil tracking information is easily accessible to all staff and provides the precise information and reports needed to better evaluate pupil progress. This has enabled leaders and staff to track and identify quickly which groups of pupils are underachieving and better match teaching and support to pupils' needs. Increased checks on how well pupils are doing are ensuring that actions are timely and that teachers are being held to account more robustly for pupil progress.

A monitoring calendar indicates that leaders have increased the frequency and range of their checks. This is giving a clearer and more accurate picture of where the school is at and ensuring that the momentum of improvement is sustained.

Visits to lessons highlighted many pockets of good practice that leaders can draw upon. For instance, some teachers mark pupils' work well because they identify what pupils have achieved and what they need to improve. They give pupils time to respond and correct their work and check subsequent work for the application of learning. However, not all teachers mark in this way and pupils know this. The separate marking and feedback policies do not make clear what leaders expect, nor do they provide teachers with clear enough direction to ensure the consistency needed. Some teachers do not model high expectations of handwriting and presentation in their marking and pupils' work shows that they do not use the handwriting scheme consistently.

In some classes pupils use displays and 'working walls' to help them know how to improve their writing and support their learning and many examples of improving practice were seen during visits to lessons. For instance, in one class, pupils used keyrings to which they add 'target keys' when they meet a writing target. They could only add the 'target key' if they had applied it consistently over a period of time and in at least five pieces of writing. This was clearly focusing pupils on what they needed to improve. It allowed them to self-assess accurately and take responsibility for their learning. It motivated them to improve. As yet, writing targets are not used

consistently across the curriculum and there are missed opportunities to use and refer to these in extended writing in other curriculum areas. Pupils say that the focus on the teaching of grammar and punctuation is helping them to improve this aspect of their writing and they are clear that, although there are discrete lessons, they are reminded and expected to apply what they learn to their writing.

Some aspects of behaviour and pupils' safety have been addressed swiftly by reorganising play times. Pupils have valued this and say it has made a difference. For instance, they say they now have more space to play safely and the number of accidents has reduced. When visiting lessons, pupils were well-behaved and fully engaged in their learning.

The governing body has wasted no time in agreeing actions to improve its effectiveness. It has reflected on what it means to be a governor at the school and agreed the level of commitment expected and needed. New governors have been appointed to bring new skills to the governing body. It has increased the frequency of performance review meetings for the headteacher to ensure that it is making the necessary checks on the progress of the school and is holding her to account for it. It is developing its monitoring role by linking governors to classes and areas of the school's work, including the areas for improvement from the inspection. It is actively looking for ways to develop partnerships with other governing bodies to learn from each other and share training opportunities. The review of governance by a National Leader of Governance is due to take place later this month.

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 increased its support and challenge for the school through the work of the school improvement adviser. She is providing an external view of the school's progress by making the checks needed to ensure leaders' judgements are secure and that the school is focusing on what needs to improve. She is supporting governors to better check on the school's progress and to provide the challenge needed. She is supporting them to manage the headteacher's performance more effectively. She is directing the school to where good practice can be found and is facilitating these links and appropriate training.

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

Yours sincerely

Anne Bowyer

Her Majesty's Inspector

