

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

T 0300 123 1231
Text Phone: 0161 618 8524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct T 01695 566932
Direct F 01695 729320
Direct email: hcarnall@cfbt.com



29 January 2014

Mrs Sarah Tate
Headteacher
Althorpe and Keadby Primary School
Station Road
Keadby
Scunthorpe
Lincolnshire
DN17 3BN

Dear Mrs Tate

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Althorpe and Keadby Primary School, North Lincolnshire

Following my visit to your school on 28 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:

- Revise the Joint Action Plan so that a more strategic, longer-term approach is taken with clearer milestones setting out what the school will have achieved at regular points throughout the timescale of the plan
- Increase the frequency and rigour of monitoring activities so that senior leaders have a better understanding of strengths and weaknesses in teaching, and teachers receive specific feedback on how to improve their practice
- Ensure the content of pupils' writing improves by focusing on stimulating activities and pupil-talk to enrich the quality of their writing

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, other senior leaders, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority who is also the School

Improvement Partner, to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. The Joint Action Plan and a number of other documents were evaluated. A visit was made to each classroom to see the teaching of literacy and a sample of pupils' writing from across the whole school was scrutinised.

Context

There have been no changes in staffing since the last inspection. There is a new Chair of Governors and the governing body has reconstituted and reduced the size of its membership. A progress team, which will monitor the delivery of the Joint Action Plan, has been established. The progress team includes representatives from the local authority and the School Improvement Partner.

Main findings

You were disappointed by the outcome of the previous inspection, but you have made a positive start by putting plans in place and monitoring the impact of actions taken so far. You have produced a Joint Action Plan with the support of the local authority, but some amendments are required to ensure leaders and managers are more sharply focused on making the necessary improvements. In particular, the plan does not take a sufficiently long-term view to show how improvements in teaching and in leadership will be supported and sustained. In addition, the plan does not set any measurable targets for key stage 1, which means it will not be possible to evaluate whether planned actions have been successful or not.

You have undertaken some monitoring of the quality of teaching and teachers have been asked to self-assess their lessons. Some of your teachers are visiting other local schools to observe outstanding lessons and this is helping them to improve their practice. You have established a monitoring calendar, and this is helping to ensure you have a better picture of strengths and weaknesses across the school. However, teaching is not being monitored frequently enough, or with sufficient rigour, to provide teachers with the detailed feedback they need to improve.

The quality of pupils' handwriting and presentation is improving. The pupils have responded well to a range of rewards you have introduced and they are proud of the improvements they have made. The pupils' writing on display around the school shows the effort they have made. The Literacy Coordinator has provided training for the whole staff designed to raise standards in writing. Teachers recognise they must now focus on embedding the approaches introduced in training so that the quality of pupils' writing improves further.

An external review of governance has been commissioned and is scheduled for next week. The governing body has been reconstituted to enable all members of the governing body to take an active role. Consequently governors have begun to challenge senior leaders more effectively. Governors have been actively involved in writing the Joint Action Plan and some governors are members of the progress team. Many governors are taking opportunities for training, including training to strengthen their understanding and use of performance data.

As a result, governors are more informed about strengths and weaknesses of the school. Governors accept the need to plan more strategically in the longer-term, so that improvements will be embedded and sustained. All, including the headteacher, the local authority and governors recognise the need for sharper processes that will enable them to hold teachers to account for the progress pupils make.

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 is providing support and challenge through the Education Standards Board. Additional time from the School Improvement Partner has been allocated and a link with a local school has been brokered to support aspects of leadership and management. The local authority has further plans to identify a partner headteacher to support the school develop more rigorous monitoring processes.

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

Yours sincerely

Chris Smith
Her Majesty's Inspector