

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 566 937

Direct F 01695 729320

Direct email: jsimmons@cfbt.com



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Mr Ron Peden
Headteacher
Moston Fields Primary School
Brookside Road
Moston
Manchester
M40 9GJ

Dear Mr Peden

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Moston Fields Primary School, Manchester

Following my visit to your school on 4 February 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:

- sharpen the action plan to ensure all actions can be evaluated against improvements in pupils' outcomes
- ensure that through their marking of pupils' work, teachers communicate their high expectations of pupils and provide every opportunity in their feedback to guide pupils on how to do even better and thereby helping them to accelerate their progress
- provide opportunities for teachers to observe good and outstanding teaching in other schools
- ensure all building work is completed as a matter of urgency so that it ceases to be a hindrance to pupils' progress. Work closely with the local authority to hold to account those responsible for managing the building work. Ensure all 'snagging' issues are resolved immediately and major works, such as providing free access

for nursery age children to a dedicated outdoor learning area, are completed with increased speed and resolve.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher and assistant headteacher, other leaders, teachers, pupils, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school action plan was evaluated. Other documentation relating to the monitoring of standards, along with a sample of pupils' work, was scrutinised.

Context

Moston Fields Primary School has undergone significant change since the last inspection. The school moved to a new site on 20 January 2014. Although major building work is now complete a large number of issues remain to be resolved, including the completion of outdoor areas. This incompleteness of building work is hindering the progress of pupils. Teaching staff changes include: the replacement of two part-time teaching posts with a full-time newly qualified teacher; a full-time teacher has been replaced on a temporary basis by a recently qualified teacher; an additional teacher has been employed to enable a reduction of class size in Key Stage 1. Leadership has been augmented by the appointment of an experienced Early Years consultant and the creation of an assistant headteacher role, filled by internal promotion.

Main findings

Despite the disruption caused by moving the school to a new site, along with incomplete building work, leaders have remained focussed on improving the quality of teaching and the quality of leadership and management. Leaders have produced an action plan which gives a clear picture of the route to becoming a good school. The action plan has been effective in keeping leaders fixed on the task in hand. However, the plan does not give a clear indication of how effectiveness will be measured in terms of improvements in the rate of pupils' progress.

The appointment of an experienced Early Years consultant has had an immediate impact on increasing the rate of progress made by younger pupils. Staff in this area are beginning to form an accurate picture of what children can and cannot do and as a result activities are more closely matched to the needs of individual pupils. As a result younger pupils are developing rapidly their reading and communication and language skills. Some pupils were observed writing without adult support and therefore being prepared well for Key Stage 1.

Leaders have taken decisive action to improve the rate of pupils' progress in Key Stage 1 by increasing the number of teachers in this phase. An additional Year 1 teacher has been appointed so that all Year 1 pupils are now taught in an age specific class. This action, coupled with the appointment of the Early Years

consultant, has already resulted in an increased opportunity for teachers to set tasks closely matched to the needs of individual pupils. Consequently pupils are getting better at understanding key words and also putting letters and sounds together so that they can read new words.

Leaders are being effective in improving the quality of teaching. Teachers have received feedback from leaders on the quality of their teaching. This feedback has been focused on areas for improvement. Subsequently teachers have made changes to the way they teach and this in turn is beginning to lead to improvements in the rate of progress made by pupils. For example one teacher who had been observed teaching mathematics, changed the structure of his mathematics lessons so that his pupils had a better understanding of why they were being given a set task. As a result pupils are making rapid progress in mathematics lessons and understand new concepts quickly.

The scrutiny of pupils' work revealed that the use of a whole school marking strategy is being applied effectively throughout the school. Pupils spoken to said that they understand what level they are working at, what they have done well, why they have got things wrong and what they can do to improve. Pupils felt that this was helpful and a 'massive' improvement compared with before the inspection. However, the same pupils said, quite rightly, being given additional questions to test their understanding, along with time to respond, would help them progress even quicker.

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

Leaders have made effective use of the support offered by the local authority, especially in recruiting an experienced early years consultant. Additional support from the local authority has been in the form of progress review meetings. In these meetings leaders are held to account about the effectiveness of their actions by local authority representatives. This along with quality assurance visits, again by local authority representatives, has contributed to ensuring leaders stay focussed on moving the school forward. Leaders have also established good links with two other good schools in order to allow teachers and teaching assistants to observe and share good practice.

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

Yours sincerely

Drew Crawshaw

Her Majesty's Inspector