

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



11 March 2014

Mrs Val Kermode  
Headteacher  
Castleway Primary School  
Castleway North  
Moreton  
Wirral  
Merseyside  
CH46 1RN

Dear Mrs Kermode

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Castleway Primary School, Wirral**

Following my visit to your school on 10 March 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on 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 December 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.

#### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher, senior staff, a group of more-able pupils, members of the Governing Body including the Chair of Governors, and a representative of the local authority. The school action plan was evaluated and documentation provided by the school was examined. Accompanied by the headteacher, the inspector visited each class briefly.

#### **Main findings**

The school and local authority have acted with urgency since the section 5 inspection. An action plan was quickly in place, ready for the beginning of the spring term. Information on Ofsted's 'Getting to Good' seminars was actively sought.

The headteacher is leading the improvement work well. She has the full confidence of governors and of staff. Her calm, caring and professional approach is appreciated at all levels, not least by pupils. Pupils are proud of their school. They displayed good attitudes to

work: they are keen to do well and take a close interest in their surroundings, in its ecology, for instance.

The whole staff is keen to improve. Key post holders were quick to put forward their ideas for further development. Pupils' core skills are weakest in writing and it is in this aspect where a considerable effort is being made. The range of work is wide, encompassing handwriting and grammar as well as composition. Strong links are made between writing and all other aspects of literacy, including speaking and listening and an appreciation of good children's literature. Early results are impressive, especially in Year 5, where the subject leader teaches. Although pupils' achievement in mathematics was not a concern, this subject is also being developed to improve pupils' levels of understanding of number and problem solving, for example.

The school's forward projections for pupils' attainment and progress in 2014 and 2015 are positive; pupils are making good progress in the current Years 5 and 6 and they are expected to do well, including the more-able pupils. However, smaller classes of widely different abilities are characteristic of the rest of the school. The school faces a considerable challenge in raising standards to the national expectations in some years. This can be seen in the current Year 2, where the proportion of pupils likely to reach Level 2 in English, the national expectation, is currently below average. The achievement of boys is a particular concern.

Robust action is being taken to improve teaching where it currently requires improvement. The local authority's support is instrumental here, helping to provide intensive support for short, fixed period of time. No one is in any doubt of what is required or of the consequences of not meeting the required standards.

The good features of governance noted in the section 5 inspection, such as its leadership and skill base, continue to make their impact on improvement. The Governing Body is very determined to see the school judged 'good'. It has been further strengthened and is increasingly involved in the daily life of 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 local authority is providing very good support and challenge to help the school improve. It acted quickly. It immediately raised the school's risk level to enable access to increased support. It conducted a review of teaching, confirmed where improvement was required and put in place intensive support from consultants for a fixed period, mentioned above. A link with an outstanding school in a similar catchment is in place. It is also improving the fabric of the building. The authority requires the school to report on progress at regular intervals. Officers have confidence in the school's capacity to move to 'good'.

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

Yours sincerely

Brian Padgett

**Her Majesty's Inspector**