

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

Direct T 01695 566863
Direct F 01695 729320
Direct email:
jbennett@cfbt.com



14 March 2014

Mrs Helen Brougham
Headteacher
Moorhouse Primary School
Crossley Street
Milnrow
Rochdale
Lancashire
OL16 4DR

Dear Mrs Brougham

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Moorhouse Primary School, Rochdale

Following my visit to your school on 13 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. The school should take further action to:

- improve the school readiness of children entering the Nursery by working more effectively with the on-site children's centre.

Evidence

Meetings were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, middle leaders, members of the Governing Body including the Chair of Governors and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school improvement plans were evaluated. The inspector visited all classes briefly, accompanied by the headteacher.

Main findings

The senior leaders, comprising the headteacher and deputy headteacher, continue to provide strong leadership and a clear direction for the school. The headteacher is promoting a culture of accountability and is extending this responsibility to the middle leaders, who are responsible for individual key stages and for important aspects such as literacy and numeracy across the school. Middle leaders are beginning to respond positively to their increased leadership role. The school is, therefore, becoming more self-critical with teachers both supporting and challenging each other to improve. Stronger leadership is also seen in rigorous performance management, which recognises that only teaching of good quality is good enough.

The headteacher's school self-evaluation is of very good quality, crystal-clear in its evaluation of what the school does well and what it needs to do better. Action plans to address the issues the school needs to resolve are also fit for purpose, but might have a clearer focus on the hoped-for impact of actions on the pupils.

Poor behaviour was an issue in school when the headteacher took up her post, less than a year ago. This continues to be tackled energetically and with considerable success. Pupils are now given more pastoral support and have the opportunity to reflect on their behaviour and its consequences. Such is the success of this approach that other schools are now showing an interest. Behaviour is improved and this is a happier school.

Teaching has begun to improve but there is a way to go before it is consistently good. More frequent assessments of the progress pupils are making is helping teaching become better targeted to the pupils' learning needs. Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is already good but achievement is not as high as it might be because of the low levels of children's readiness for school when they enter Nursery, particularly in their lack of language and communication skills. The headteacher is forging a new relationship with the on-site children's centre and this is a new area for development.

Governance is improving. In the past it has been supportive but not sufficiently challenging of the school's performance. The Governing Body has been strengthened by the addition of a headteacher to its membership. The governors are better informed and have an increased understanding of performance data. They are more often in school. A review of governance is being arranged.

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 supporting the Governing Body to become more accountable. The school is part of an active partnership of local schools that is the source of consultancy support and advice for the school, including that from a Local Leader in Education.

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

Yours sincerely

Brian Padgett

Her Majesty's Inspector