

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 566857

Direct F 01695 729320

Direct email: jkinsman@cfbt.com



02 April 2014

Mrs Caroline Chadwick
Headteacher
Woodfield Primary School
Woodfield Road
Harrogate
North Yorkshire
HG1 4HZ

Dear Mrs Chadwick

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Woodfield Primary School, North Yorkshire

Following my visit to your school on 28 March 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 January 2014. 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:

- Eliminate weaker teaching.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you and with two members of the governing body. I held a telephone discussion with a representative of the local authority. These discussions focused on the actions taken since the last inspection. The school improvement action plans were evaluated.

I toured the school with you and we observed short parts of lessons and phonics sessions together. We also looked at some of pupils' work in the lessons. We discussed a number of documents, including the governors' plan for monitoring the

work of the school, data about pupils' current progress and records of monitoring teaching. I had lunch with pupils in the dining room.

Context

On the day of this inspection one class and their teacher were out of school on a residential visit. Two other teachers were not in school.

Main findings

You have acted swiftly to address the points suggested for improvement at the time of your last inspection. Your actions are having a positive impact on improving pupils' achievement, notably in reading. Teaching is improving but your records and our discussions confirm that the quality remains inconsistent.

Some decisions you have taken to set the school on the path towards being judged good by the time of your next inspection are already bearing fruit. For example, the teaching of phonics (letters and their sounds) is improving. Pupils have been divided into separate teaching groups according to their ability or level and are getting more regular phonics practice than before. Your data and our visits to phonics sessions show that pupils' progress in phonics is accelerating. This is helping to develop pupils' reading skills at a faster pace.

You are becoming much sharper in analysing data on pupils' progress. Changes made to how you monitor progress allow you to see more easily how each group of pupils and each class is doing. You are rightly now sharing this information with class teachers and middle leaders so that they are beginning to play a greater part in your drive to raise achievement.

Your data on pupils' current progress show that progress is improving, but remains uneven across the year groups. You are aware that this is mainly because the quality of teaching is too variable. Since your last inspection you have developed more effective ways to monitor the quality of teaching over time. You are collecting a wider range of evidence, such as scrutinising pupils' written work, as well as observing lessons. Records focus more directly on how well pupils are learning; and what pupils' written work reveals about their progress. This evidence is supporting you in challenging some teachers to do better.

Records and our visits to lessons show that teachers' skills are strengthening. For example, visits to other schools are stimulating fresh ideas to make lessons more engaging and challenging. The phonics sessions we observed were delivered well, pitched at the right speed for each group and so pupils' learning was good. However, you need to consider how best to ensure that the most able pupils in the large, upper Key Stage 2 class progress faster and attain higher levels at the end of Key Stage 2.

Your plans for improvement are sharply focused on improving pupils' achievement, especially in reading and mathematics. You have set out higher expectations for pupils' progress and have a very clear programme specifying how governors are monitoring this.

Governors are clearer about their role in checking how well the school is doing. Some governors have been in to school to see for themselves, for example to observe phonics teaching, and discussed what they thought with you. They are better informed than before. They appreciate the weekly written update you do for them detailing the actions you have taken and the benefit these are bringing. The training for governing bodies led by the local authority since your inspection has given members of the governing body greater confidence in being able to question and challenge you about pupils' achievement. They understand the data about pupils' progress better than they did before.

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 appointment of a new local authority link officer for the school shortly before the section 5 inspection has proved to be a good decision as the pace of improvement in school is accelerating. Local authority support has been ratcheted up further since the inspection and is proving effective in improving teaching and in strengthening how the school evaluates its work.

You are using advice well, for example in choosing new books to boost reading. Already, data show that pupils' progress is improving. Your work within a local group of schools is opening up the school to sharing new ideas. You need to continue to access the support of the local authority to ensure that you eliminate the weaker teaching that remains.

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

Yours sincerely

Honoree Gordon

Her Majesty's Inspector

The letter should be copied to the following:

- Appropriate authority - Chair of the Governing Body
- Local authority