

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 566 937

Direct F 01695 729320

Direct email: jsimmons@cfbt.com



8 May 2014

Mrs Sonya Black
Acting Headteacher
Hart Primary School
Magdalene Drive
Hart Village
Hartlepool
TS27 3AP

Dear Mrs Black

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Hart Primary School, Hartlepool

Following my visit to your school on 7 May 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 February 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:

- Refine the post-Ofsted action plan to ensure success criteria are measurable and those specific to Hart identified clearly. This is to ensure governors can more precisely measure the impact of the work of leaders on the achievements and progress of pupils in Hart.

Evidence

During the visit I held meetings with you, senior leaders, three parents, a group of pupils and three representatives of the governing body from the Hart and St Peter's Federation. I met with the Assistant Director of Education for Hartlepool local authority and the National Leader of Education, from Eldon Grove Academy, Hartlepool, who has been brokered by the local authority to help the school.

Meetings focused on the impact of actions taken since the inspection. The post-Ofsted action plan and the most recent headteacher's report to governors were reviewed. Information on the progress pupils have made in their learning and pupils work books was also scrutinised. I observed two part-lessons with you and visited a group activity where pupils were developing their skills in understanding the letters that sounds represent (phonics).

Context

There have been no changes in the school's organisation since the inspection.

Main findings

Quickly following the inspection, you, governors and senior team implemented a post-Ofsted action plan to drive improvements speedily. You, the local authority and governors are monitoring the actions regularly. However success criteria do not always identify specific targets for Hart pupils because the action plan is for both schools in the federation. As a result it limits governors' ability to check the progress of Hart School pupils specifically.

A wide range of professional development activities for staff have already been undertaken. These include whole-staff training, visits to outstanding schools and specific time-limited action plans for teachers whose lessons previously required improvement. This work is making a positive difference to the quality of teaching and consequently to the better progress pupils are now making. Scrutiny of books, information on pupils' achievements and the lessons we observed together show that better teaching is making a positive difference to pupils' progress. For example, carefully planned activities are helping to move pupils on more speedily from their different starting points in the Key Stage 1 class. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the teacher's better-focus on developing children's writing skills is shown in children's improved writing in the unit and in the enthusiastic way children are using their understanding of the letters that sounds represent to develop their individual letters to the 'giant'. Comparison of pupils' work in their pre-inspection work books to their current books shows improvement in presentation and handwriting skills and to the hastened progress they are making in class. Pupils speak proudly of their improved work and the 'zero tolerance' all teachers have of poor work. Pupils, parents and carers speak positively about the changes being made in the school. Parents who spoke to inspectors say they recognise the positive difference changes are making to their children's achievements and enjoyment and in the improved communications with them. Parents found the opportunity to observe a literacy lesson particularly helpful.

External support

Following the inspection, the local authority immediately brokered a range of training, support and guidance from the National Leader of Education and her team.

This included training to middle leaders in developing further their skills in monitoring the work of the school and in ensuring teachers' assessments of pupils' work is accurate. Such work together with training to governors provided by the Assistant Director of Education is building the skills of middle leaders and governors effectively. They are becoming more skilled in evaluating the impact of actions the school is taking to drive improvements in the quality of teaching and in pupils' progress.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children and Adults Services for Hartlepool.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Farrow

Her Majesty's Inspector