

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



20 June 2014

Mr J Crabtree
Headteacher
Watersheddings Primary School
Broadbent Road
Oldham
Greater Manchester
OL1 4HU

Dear Mr Crabtree

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Watersheddings Primary School, Oldham

Following my visit to your school on 19 June 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection 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 March 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:

- continue building on the good initiatives to improve teaching and learning already being undertaken by the school
- ensure that staff appointed to the school in the future are sufficiently well supported so that they are able to help the school move to 'good'.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with you, other senior leaders, pupils, members of the Governing Body, and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school improvement plan was evaluated.

Context

Since the section 5 inspection the school has appointed a new Reception class teacher and is preparing to expand to move from a one form, to a one-and-a-half-form entry school from September 2014.

Main findings

All areas for improvement identified at the last inspection are being tackled effectively with commitment from you and staff across the school. The areas for improvement in the inspection report have been appropriately included in the school improvement plan. The plan has clear, detailed milestones for improvements and includes key success criteria linked to well-considered resource implications and realistic timelines. Much of the plan is already underway and early targets to improve, for example, feedback and marking, are being met. A range of improvement initiatives are in place to address priority areas. These include a co-coaching programme to develop the skills and confidence of middle leaders in tackling underachievement; a joint moderation session with teachers from an outstanding local primary on writing; staff attendance at middle leadership training; more rigorous and regular monitoring of pupils' progress; and after school computing sessions for staff.

A change to the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning has led to a tighter focus in lesson observations on stretch and challenge for the most able pupils. All staff now hold a leadership responsibility for an aspect of teaching and learning including the leadership of foundation subjects and all have been involved in the development of the 'learning challenge' thematic curriculum. Teachers benefit from the school's membership of subject associations and many attend subject network meetings to share best practice. An initiative to make mathematics teaching more contextual and 'real' is popular with pupils. To achieve this, a mathematics consultant has trained staff in the development of number skills through problem-solving activities. To introduce pupils to more 'purposeful' writing, teachers are developing, among other initiatives, a school blog.

All of the pupils I met approve of the changes to teaching and learning since the last inspection. They enjoy commenting on teachers' feedback in their books and all thought that their handwriting had improved a lot in the last few months. They said that the work in lessons and their homework is now more challenging and they are getting 'pushed to the next level'. Pupils enjoy school and feel that their opinions are listened to and acted upon by staff. One boy commented that he 'would like even more teachers so we can get through our work even quicker'.

Initiatives to support the most able pupils are now in place. These include working as part of a media project with a local secondary academy, developing computing skills at Oldham Football club and attending a book club for able readers.

Leaders at all levels have a good understanding of what needs to be done to sustain improvements. Governance is particularly strong. Governors are skilled, committed and supportive. They have taken advantage of local authority and HMI governor training and are well placed to continue holding you and senior leaders to account.

External support

The local authority has confidence in the capacity of the senior leadership and governors to get the school to 'good'. They have brokered support from the headteacher of a local outstanding primary school as a school performance adviser. The school is continuing to access support for English from a school improvement partner. Senior and middle leaders are attending hub meetings provided by the local authority for aspects such as teaching and learning, literacy, Early Years, special educational needs and inclusion.

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

Yours sincerely

Janet Palmer

Her Majesty's Inspector