

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 566868
Direct F 01695 729320
Direct email: pnuttie@cfbt.com



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Miss Lynsey Swales
Acting Headteacher
Scapegoat Hill Junior and Infant School
School Road
Scapegoat Hill
Golcar
Huddersfield
West Yorkshire
HD7 4NU

Dear Miss Swales/Miss Shackelton

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Scapegoat Hill Junior and Infant School, Kirklees

Following my visit to your school on 17 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 February 2014. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are not taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the last section 5 inspection. This is because not enough was done in the weeks immediately following the inspection to deal directly with school improvement priorities. However, the school has made rapid and significant progress in beginning to address these issues in recent weeks. The school should take immediate action to:

- maintain the recent accelerated rate of improvement by securing effective leadership capacity in the medium and long-term
- establish more robust procedures for holding teachers to account, monitoring the quality of teaching and ensuring that feedback to teachers focuses on the achievement and progress of pupils and groups of pupils in lessons

- ensure the effective and rapid induction of new and returning staff so that recent improvements become embedded in all staffs' practice.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with the acting headteachers, 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

The headteacher is currently absent. An acting headship arrangement is in place with you as a seconded leader from a local federation of schools providing additional leadership capacity. A class teacher has recently returned from maternity leave. Another teacher is leaving the school at the end of this term.

Main findings

Since starting in post at Easter you have worked quickly to implement a range of actions to improve the quality of teaching across the school. You and the school governors are resolute in your conviction to improve the school so that it is judged to be good or better when it is next inspected and you are now bringing the necessary drive and focus to the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. However, given that significant time was lost in the weeks immediately following the previous inspection, you have not yet been able to ensure recent improvements are sufficiently embedded and secure. Furthermore, continuing staff changes mean that the improvements that are now emerging will need to be implemented quickly and consistently by new and returning staff. This will require rapid and effective induction processes to be in place so that no further time is lost.

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes in and around school are much improved. This is because teachers and support staff have a more consistent approach to promoting pupils' behaviour that supports their learning as well as improving respect for others. Communication with parents and the wider community has also been improved with more information being provided in letters to parents and a new active Facebook page.

A programme of staff training has been implemented with a focus on improving the teaching of numeracy. An audit of provision identified further areas for development including some gaps in teacher knowledge. However, recent reviews of teaching and learning in the school indicates that learning from this training is not yet being applied consistently in all classrooms.

The schools' action plan is now fit for purpose. The plan focuses on the areas for improvement from the recent inspection report, with a clear allocation of key staff and governors responsible for monitoring the progress being made by the school. It identifies appropriate resources to support the proposed actions. It has recently

been revised and updated to accurately reflect the current situation in the school. However, you have identified that the systems for holding teachers to account and identifying what they need to do to improve their practice are not routinely implemented. As a result the performance of individual teachers and their contribution to the progress pupils make is not always clear.

Governors have rightly been focussed on securing sustainable leadership capacity in the school. They have worked hard to ensure relative stability in the school through a period of turbulence. Governors acknowledge that the school made a slow start to addressing the areas for improvement following the last inspection. They now have a good understanding of what the school needs to do to improve, increasingly holding school leaders to account and having a sharp focus on improving teaching and learning in the school. They are well aware of the need to maintain this focus whilst securing effective leadership for the school moving forward.

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 has worked effectively with governors to support recent improvements and secure leadership capacity in the school. They have an additional school support plan in place and have increased the level of monitoring from the Kirklees Learning Partner. The school also receives valuable and effective support from a local federation of schools. This has been brokered by the local authority as part of a wider programme of support.

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

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Brown
Her Majesty's Inspector