

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



10 July 2014

Mrs Jean Preston
Headteacher
All Saints Featherstone CofE (VA) Junior Infant and Nursery School
North Close
Featherstone
Pontefract
West Yorkshire
WF7 6BQ

Dear Mrs Preston

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to All Saints Featherstone CofE (VA) Junior Infant and Nursery School, Wakefield

Following my visit to your school on 9 July 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. Although you, and the Chair of Governors, were unavailable at the time of my visit, please pass on my thanks to your staff and governors for the help they gave me. Thank you for the time they made available to discuss the actions the school is 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.

With support from the local authority and links with a partner school, 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:

- ensure leaders and managers, at all levels, check improvements with a greater focus on the positive difference their actions are making and evaluate these incisively in their reports to governors
- review the school improvement plan; sharpening the criteria against which improvement is measured and articulating more clearly the improvements required in leadership, pupils' progress, and the quality of teaching and in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
- undertake a review of the use and effectiveness of pupil premium funding.

Evidence

During my visit, I met with the deputy headteacher and Key Stage 2 co-ordinator, the vice chair and two other members of the governing body, a representative from the local authority and the headteacher from North Featherstone Primary School who has been working with the school as an advisory headteacher. In these meetings we discussed the action taken since the last inspection. The school's improvement plans were evaluated. Documentation relating to monitoring activities, pupils' progress and the work of governors were scrutinised and we conducted a tour of the school.

Context

Since the inspection the subject leader for mathematics has left the school. At the time of my visit you were on a period of extended absence and the deputy headteacher was deputising. Temporary teaching arrangements were in place in three classes in the school and four new teachers have been appointed to start in September 2014.

Main findings

With the support of teachers and the advisory headteacher from the partner school, teachers have visited other schools to gather information about approaches and strategies to help them address the issues identified in the recent inspection. They have reviewed aspects of classroom organisation and management to help to engage pupils more effectively in lessons. While there is some evidence of more practical approaches and interesting activities, including the use of learning outside the classroom, greater consistency is still needed in the use of approaches to teaching that engage pupils and help them to show positive attitudes to learning.

The school has reviewed its marking policy, however, while there is improved compliance with the policy, the marking of pupils work is not always of good enough quality to help pupils make better progress and address gaps in their understanding.

Staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage have worked with a leader from the partner school to begin to address some of the issues identified in the report. There are now more opportunities for writing and children are beginning to include writing into their play. From September 2014 there will be new teachers and leadership in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school has brokered the continued support from the partner school to ensure the improvements in provision are maintained.

The school has drafted an action plan in response to the issues raised at the recent inspection. However, there are weaknesses in the plan that need to be addressed:

- expectations of pupils' achievement in some year groups are too modest and lack challenge
- the extent to which the plan clearly articulates what successful progress towards 'good' looks like is limited
- the measures and milestones by which governors can hold leaders accountable for the improvements they are making are not precise enough
- the plan does not extend far enough into the next academic year to make clear the entirety of the journey to 'good'.

The declining trend in pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 has been reversed. Initial indications of outcomes at the end of each key stage show there have been improvements in pupils' achievements. School leaders have already begun to analyse this data to see what can be learned and improved further. This initial scrutiny of data suggests that gaps between the performance of pupils supported by the 'pupil premium' and their peers are still too wide and their progress is not as strong as their peers. The school should undertake a review of how they spend the pupil premium funding to ensure it is having enough impact on the progress of these pupils and ensuring they catch up quickly.

Governors are supportive of the school but accept they need to strengthen the accountability of leaders and managers and ensure everyone is clear about what improvements are needed on the school's journey to good. Governors log their visits to the school, which are regular, but need to focus more on the impact leaders and managers are having in bringing about lasting improvements.

Ofsted will carry out further visits and provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

There has been significant support from the advisory headteacher and the partner school which has helped leaders and teachers to observe more effective practice and evaluate the changes they need to bring about at All Saints. The local authority has been instrumental in brokering this useful support for leaders and the school is keen to continue this given the significant staff changes in September 2014. However, the local authority is aware of need to monitor carefully the extent to which the school's own leadership capacity is being built.

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

Yours sincerely

Adrian Guy
Her Majesty's Inspector