

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

Direct T 01695 566 937

Direct F 01695 729 320

Direct email: [jsimmons@cfbt.com](mailto:jsimmons@cfbt.com)



18 September 2014

Mrs Lisa Walton-Thorpe  
Headteacher  
Christ Church CE Academy  
Deighton Road  
Huddersfield  
West Yorkshire  
HD2 1JP

Dear Mrs Walton-Thorpe

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Christ Church CE Academy, Kirklees**

Following my visit to your academy on 17 September 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 academy since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the academy was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in May 2014. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and the local governing body are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The academy should take further action to:

- sharpen measurable success criteria and milestones in the improvement plan
- agree key principles of effective practice in teaching and learning.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher and senior leaders, middle leaders, members of the local governing body and a group of pupils. In addition, a telephone conversation was held with a representative of the local authority. The inspector evaluated a range of documentation including: the improvement plan; monitoring reports; the tracking of pupils' progress; policies and the minutes of local governing body meetings. Furthermore, the headteacher took

the inspector on a tour of the academy to look briefly at teaching and learning and the changes made to provision since the inspection.

## **Context**

The headteacher at the time of the last inspection in May left the academy at the end of the summer term in July 2014. A new headteacher has been appointed and took up post at the beginning of September.

## **Main findings**

Although clearly disappointed and not expecting the outcomes of the inspection in May, senior leaders and staff have picked themselves up and have responded with renewed vigour to tackle the issues for improvement. As a result, no time has been lost; the pace of change has accelerated and everyone is stepping up to the mark. Immediate action has been taken to tighten procedures and strengthen provision with a 'whole staff' approach to training and support. This is leading to improved levels of consistency in teaching and learning and greater teamwork and cooperation between staff and teaching assistants. Teachers are learning from one another and links with other schools are being used well to encourage staff to be reflective in their own practice.

In a short period of time senior leaders have made good headway in redesigning the guidance to pupils on how they can improve their work. A new marking policy is already having an impact and has the approval of pupils who appreciate the additional time to respond to teachers' comments. Improvements are also gathering pace in how staff record children's progress in the Early Years with improved systems for tracking and the moderation of work.

Systems to strengthen teaching and learning are underway. All teachers have clear targets linked to pupils' progress. Improvements in how leaders at all levels check on the quality of teaching have begun with a greater focus on analysing information from lesson observations, pupil performance data and from the scrutiny of pupils' work in their books. Senior leaders have correctly recognised that the next step is to agree some clear principles of what makes effective learning for pupils in all lessons.

The improvement plan follows closely the areas for improvements identified at the previous inspection. The plan includes some suitable actions and intentions. However, some of the targets within the plan are not as sharp as they could be and do not have clear milestones or success criteria against which the impact of actions can be measured. This makes it difficult for members of the local governing body to pinpoint with accuracy how well the academy is improving over-time.

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

## **External support**

In the past, the local authority has provided an effective level of support and challenge to the academy through a private arrangement. This has led to improvements in the quality of teaching and has strengthened the skills of senior leaders. Further plans are in place to provide additional layers of support to the academy with the appointment of an independent consultant and an independent improvement adviser working alongside colleagues from the academy sponsor.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the local Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Kirklees and the DfE-Academies Advisers Unit for academies.

Yours sincerely

Steve Isherwood

**Her Majesty's Inspector**