

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



24 September 2014

Mr Andrew Mellor
Headteacher
Blackpool St Nicholas CofE Primary School
School Road
Marton Moss
Blackpool
Lancashire
FY4 5DS

Dear Mr Mellor

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Blackpool St Nicholas CofE Primary School, Blackpool

Following my visit to your school on 23 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 school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in December 2013. 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:

- ensure that the least able pupils receive highly effective support for literacy so that they can make the very best progress
- check that all pupils receive clear and simple advice about how to improve their work.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior leaders and members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I carried out a number of short visits to lessons and scrutinised examples of pupils' work.

Main findings

All parents I spoke to were overwhelmingly positive about the school. They were assured that their children were safe, well looked after and making good progress. A number of parents had moved their children from neighbouring schools where they had suffered bullying.

Assembly time is inspirational and very spiritual. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary with very little supervision. Pupils look incredibly smart in their uniforms and show great passion and ability when singing. This is a very positive and meaningful start to the day.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is very well organised promoting good progress. Pupils who have special educational needs receive high-quality support. Thorough and timely assessments are completed on entry to reception so that activities are well-targeted according to pupils' needs. Pupil tracking is supported by secure evidence.

Scrutiny of work and lesson observations in Key Stage 1 show that some of the less able pupils are unable to make the best progress because the teaching of writing is not appropriately adapted for their needs. The very thorough assessments completed in the EYFS are not used enough by teachers in Year 1 to plan the teaching of writing.

Some books show that pupils are receiving high quality feedback, however, this is not always the case; pupils do not always respond to teacher's comments and correct work accordingly.

Efforts to improve attendance are bearing fruit and some of the poorest attenders are now attending with much greater regularity.

Senior leaders have undertaken an in-depth analysis of the achievement of different groups. This clearly highlights that for many pupils the gaps in attainment are closing and action is being taken where gaps still exist.

A thorough review of governance has taken place and governors are taking action accordingly. Governors have a good understanding of some of the key issues facing the school and know they need to continually develop their understanding of pupils' achievement.

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

Senior leaders and governors have accessed high quality support from the local authority, a National Leader of Governance and Lancashire School Improvement Service. This has led to tangible improvements in achievement.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Blackpool and as below.

Yours sincerely

Sally Kenyon

Her Majesty's Inspector

The letter should be copied to the following:

- Appropriate authority - Chair of the Governing Body/Interim Executive Board
- Local authority – including where the school is an academy
- Diocese – for voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools.