

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



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Miss J Richardson
Headteacher
Westwoodside CofE Academy
Nethergate
Doncaster
South Yorkshire
DN9 2DR

Dear Miss Richardson

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Westwoodside CofE Academy, North Lincolnshire

Following my visit to your school on 13 October 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 May 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:

- make the milestones in the joint action plan more precise and to occur at regular intervals so that it can be seen clearly if the planned actions are having the correct impact
- ensure that differences in the performance of groups of pupils are clearly known and reflected in lesson plans
- ensure that the quality of teaching is good in all subjects and that pupils' key skills in English and mathematics are used properly in all lessons
- identify how effectively the new curriculum is embracing opportunities to promote British values and as a result to identify if additional training is needed.

Evidence

During the inspection, I met with you, your deputy, the Chair and another member of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. During these meetings I evaluated your joint action plan, considered the 2014 national test results and we looked at the performance management targets for the current year. You took me on a tour of the school to observe pupils at work.

Context

Temporary staff and two teachers left at the end of the summer term. There are four new teachers who took up their appointments on 1 September 2014 in the Nursery, Years 1, 3 and 5. Other members of staff have responsibility for developing how pupils' work is assessed and improving mathematics in all year groups. The Chair of the Governing Body has stepped down and a new Chair has been appointed. There are still some vacancies on the governing body which are in the process of being filled.

Main findings

The plans already in place and noted in the s5 inspection report have been developed and refined further taking into account the staff changes which account for half of the classes. Some staff have taken on new responsibilities, you have encouraged them to share your vision for the school and to embrace your high expectations. The way pupils' books are marked has been changed and pupil planners introduced so that parents can be included. It is however, too early to see the impact of this work. Curriculum changes have begun and it was agreed that you will check how well teachers are teaching different subjects in order to promote British values and to identify if additional training is needed. Performance management targets for teachers are demanding and linked to the progress pupils make. However you recognise that some could be tightened further especially to reflect the variation in performance between some groups of pupils.

The way governors work has been re-organised since the inspection and following the review of governance. Although this review was helpful some key points, for example, the way pupil premium monies and sports funding make a difference, was not considered. Governors are involved in progress meetings but recognise, as you do, the need to make the milestones in the joint action plan more precise in some places. At the moment, it is difficult to make sure whether the actions undertaken are having the intended impact and that the school is moving forward in the right direction and at the required pace. Nevertheless, the governors to whom I spoke, have a clear understanding of how to challenge senior leaders and welcome the open conversations that take place regularly.

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

External support

Staff welcome the developing links with other local schools so that they can visit to observe and share practice. The 'Ensuring Good' project run by local authority officers is about to start and therefore it is too early to judge whether it will have the intended impact. However, local authority officers visit regularly and provide effective challenge and support particularly for senior leaders. Their next review of teaching and learning should focus on lessons other than English and mathematics so that they can check the progress all pupils make in these subjects.

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

Yours sincerely

Marianne Young

Her Majesty's Inspector