

CfBT Inspection Services
Suite 22

West Lancs Investment Centre T 0300 123 1231

Maple View
Skelmersdale

WN8 9TG

Text Phone: 0161 6188524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct T 01695 566937

Direct F 01695 729320

Direct email: jsimmons@cfbt.com

13 February 2015

Mrs Kate Buckley
Executive Headteacher
Priory Lane Community School
West Common Gardens
Scunthorpe
Lincolnshire
DN17 1EJ

Dear Mrs Buckley

Serious weaknesses monitoring inspection of Priory Lane Community School

Following my visit to your school on 12 February 2015 I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses following the section 5 inspection which took place in February 2014. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school is not making enough progress towards the removal of the serious weakness designation.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be published on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Interim Executive Body (IEB), and the Director of Children's Services for North Lincolnshire.

Yours sincerely

Marianne Young

Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in February 2014.

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better in all classes by:
 - urgently eradicating all inadequate teaching improving some teachers' subject knowledge, especially in Key Stage 2, in writing and mathematics, so that they can assess pupils' work at the right level and have sufficiently high expectations of the level of work that pupils in each year group can attain
 - ensuring all teachers check the progress that pupils are making in lessons, spot any mistakes and adapt their teaching, questioning and explanations accordingly
 - improving the teaching of phonics (the sounds letters make) so that pupils throughout the school improve their reading and spelling skills
 - ensuring that expectations of behaviour are equally high in all classes and that lessons are interesting and purposeful so that standards of behaviour do not lapse.

- Improve progress and raise attainment in order that all pupils achieve as well as they can by:
 - accelerating the progress of pupils supported by the pupil premium in reading, writing and mathematics
 - requiring pupils in all year groups to do more extended writing and improve their spelling and punctuation, especially in Key Stage 2
 - expecting pupils to work at the highest level that are capable of in each lesson, especially in writing
 - ensuring that pupils apply and develop their writing and mathematics skills in other subjects.

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management further by:
 - ensuring that subject leaders develop their leadership skills and take greater responsibility for checking on the quality of teaching and learning and helping their colleagues to teach their subjects better
 - helping subject leaders to have an accurate view of the school's data and to use their information to improve teaching and pupils' achievement in their subject area.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Report on the second monitoring inspection on 12 February 2015.

Evidence

The inspector met with the executive headteacher and the deputy headteacher. The deputy headteacher from Westcliffe Primary School was also present. Meetings were also held with three phase leaders, two representatives from the local authority and the Chair of the Interim Executive Body. The inspection focused mainly on the very recent changes to leadership and the monitoring work undertaken linked specifically to improving the quality of pupils' writing.

Context

The headteacher retired on 31 December 2014. All members of the governing body were removed by the local authority at the same time. The local authority appointed an IEB which began work on 1 January 2015. The school is led on a part-time basis by an executive headteacher who is supported for the rest of the week by other senior leaders from Westcliffe Primary School. One member of staff left during October 2014 and since December 2014 another member of staff has been absent on maternity leave. Following building work, the early years and Key Stage 1 classes moved to the site occupied by the Key Stage 2 classes at the start of January 2015.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

Since the previous monitoring inspection there has been significant change to the senior leadership and governance of the school. These changes were not finalised until recently. Prior to the start of this term, progress in moving the school forward was weak and not as expected. Actions took place but were not evaluated with sufficient rigour to make sure they were effective. In addition, the early years and Key Stage 1 classes have recently moved. These factors have caused significant turbulence and some key issues identified at the section 5 inspection in February 2014 have yet to be addressed.

Since January 2015, the executive headteacher together with other senior leaders and members of the IEB has started to gain an understanding of the needs of the school. The executive headteacher is formulating clear priorities for improvement within tight time frames so that changes and support can be checked regularly. Members of the IEB have appropriate previous educational experience and are able to provide rigorous challenge to all senior leaders. All senior leaders recognise the imperative need for provision to improve rapidly throughout the school. They are determined that this should happen. At present, the work of phase leaders is underdeveloped.

Strengths in the school's approaches to securing improvement:

- The findings from the regular monitoring to check on the quality of pupils' writing are used effectively. This work ensures that additional support for individual pupils is provided and also whether that already given is having the intended effect.
- In most lessons pupils are responding to the marking in their books which is then checked by the teachers.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds letters make) enabled pupils in Year 1, in the national tests in 2014, to do well in this important subject.
- Pupils are rewarded for a range of activities designed to ensure that they do as well as they can and behave sensibly in lessons and at social times.

Weaknesses in the school's approaches to securing improvement:

- The standards reached by pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 in 2014 were lower than in the previous year.
- In 2014, pupils in Year 6 made less than expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This situation was similar for boys and girls and especially for disadvantaged pupils. The gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers was wide.
- The early promise shown by Year 1 pupils in phonics is not translated into improved reading skills as pupils move through the school.
- The accuracy of assessing pupils' work in some classes is not secure. As a result some pupils are not challenged appropriately.
- Teachers and support assistants do not always work together effectively so that the skills of both are used successfully.
- Initial monitoring of mathematics teaching, done by senior leaders, indicates that there are significant issues to be addressed in most year groups.

External support

Local authority officers have worked with the lead teacher for literacy providing support and challenge when looking at pupils' writing books. This support is set to continue. Senior local authority officers took decisive action under their statutory powers when they removed all members of the governing body. The senior School Improvement Officer works closely with senior leaders and members of the IEB through his weekly visits to the school in order to keep a close eye on the current situation.