

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 566850  
**Direct F** 01695 729320  
**Direct email:** [dmccarrick@cfbt.com](mailto:dmccarrick@cfbt.com)



24 March 2015

Mrs Lesley Ironmonger  
Headteacher  
Waterloo Primary School  
Worthington Street  
Ashton-Under-Lyne  
Lancashire  
OL7 9NA

Dear Mrs Ironmonger

**Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Waterloo Primary School, Tameside**

Following my visit to your school on 23 March 2015, 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 June 2014. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. At its previous section 5 inspection the school was also judged to require improvement.

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:

- continue to improve the quality of pupils' writing by providing more opportunities to redraft work and correct spelling
- continue to work on challenging and improving poor and anti-social behaviour
- make better use of teaching assistants to ensure that the pupils they are working with begin to improve more quickly
- ensure that all groups of pupils, especially those with special educational needs, boys and the most able, make much better progress than at present.

## **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with yourself and your deputy, the Chair of the Governing Body and three other governors alongside the author of their recent review of governance. Discussions were held with groups of pupils from Years 3 and 5. A meeting was also held with the associate headteacher from Silver Springs Primary Academy who has recently started to provide support for the school, to discuss the action taken since the last monitoring visit in October and the level of support currently being provided. The level of support required for the future was also discussed. The school's development plan, self-evaluation and other documentation, which you provided, were also evaluated. In addition, we observed several lessons and teaching sessions in the morning which I followed up with a learning walk. These observations focussed on the overall quality of teaching and learning. In addition, I interviewed the literacy, science and history subject leaders to discuss how they were managing and developing their subjects across the school.

## **Context**

You confirmed that you were retiring at the end of the summer term and that the school was in the process of appointing a new headteacher for the start of the new academic year in September. Since my visit in October, an additional learning mentor has been appointed and a teacher on maternity leave has been replaced in the interim by a newly qualified teacher. The Inclusion team has been restructured and the appointment of a SENCO has been made permanent from February. An external review of the governance has been completed and the governing body has been reconstituted as a result.

## **Main findings**

Although some improvement is evident, current inconsistencies in teaching and outcomes for pupils mean that progress continues to be slow. Standards remain below the national average and will show only minimal improvement this year. Phonics (the teaching of letters and sounds) remains a concern and although 52% of pupils are expected to leave the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) this summer with a good level of development, this still remains below the national average. Progress of pupils given their low starting points is generally good and the gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers is very narrow or non-existent. Boys do less well than the girls and not all pupils with special educational needs make the progress they should. The number of pupils attaining high levels in national tests is also low. Inconsistencies in teaching also mean that the most able pupils are not always challenged. These variations across the school and between classes restrict the pace of improvement.

Pupils interviewed were positive about the school overall and they agreed that they were beginning to notice some improvement. The detention system is having some

impact on improving behaviour in lessons. Although pupils agreed that behaviour was now better than in the past they also felt that too many lessons are still being disrupted by pupils shouting out, fidgeting or drawing attention to themselves by poor attitudes. However, this varies from class to class. In some classes pupils are well behaved and the atmosphere is purposeful, in other pupils are off task, too easily distracted and much learning time is wasted. Pupils have also noted improved teaching in some subjects, notably history and science. History has now become one of the pupils' favourite subjects. We observed an engaging lesson where pupils were studying Celtic Britain using a variety of sources, including pictures of Celtic artefacts. This activity involved pupils understanding the differences between primary and secondary sources and touched a competitive streak as pupils raced to interpret what the various sources told them about life in Celtic times. In these subjects where there has been an improvement, teachers are much clearer about what they are expected to teach, they use a range of good resources and make good use of teaching ideas provided by subject association guidance.

Despite this, teaching overall still requires further improvement. During my joint observations with you and during my learning walk in the afternoon, I observed a mixture of effective and weaker practice. Not all teachers are yet secure in what they are teaching. Writing remains an ongoing concern despite the recent improvements evident in history and geography. Presentation of work remains weak, especially among the boys. Too many careless mistakes are being made, even when copying from the board. There is little evidence to show that these are being challenged on a regular basis. There was limited evidence to show work being re-drafted or spellings corrected. Poor spelling, punctuation and grammar is holding back far too many pupils and is not being challenged with any consistency. For example, in one class improvements in spelling were being supported by use of dictionaries but this was not the case in a parallel class. There has been some improvement in writing across the curriculum, notably in science and history, where there is now great depth in coverage and teaching has shown improvement.

Pupils have also noted the greater use of setting in English and mathematics which enable teaching groups to be smaller. On the whole, they feel this is beneficial. They also identified that guided reading was much more structured. However, observations of guided reading sessions identified that teaching remains inconsistent with routines not yet fully established in some classes. Some pupils are still finding it difficult to work independently without the input or supervision of an adult. The effectiveness of teaching assistants varies greatly across the school. Some are well directed and provide focussed support for individuals others provide general class support with limited impact.

Work to develop subject leadership is ongoing but still remains in its infancy. Many subject leaders are new to their role, although some like the history and science leaders are beginning to have an impact. In these subjects, a clear teaching programme has been outlined, appropriate resources have been identified and there is emerging evidence to show improvement. The more effective subject leaders are

aware of strengths and weaknesses in their subject, attend courses to enhance their subject leadership skills and offer clear support to colleagues to ensure lessons are more relevant and engaging for pupils. Overall, management structures are being established but are not yet fully impacting on and accelerating improvement. Too many inconsistencies remain, particularly in the quality of teaching.

A review of governance has taken place. This concluded that governance has improved although it still needs development in certain areas. Governors are now more knowledgeable about the school and are developing their skills, including the ability to challenge school leaders and hold them to account rather than accepting things at face value. This is being supported by a programme of ongoing training.

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**

The local authority continues to monitor the school on a regular basis. Since January, support has been brokered from an associate headteacher and her school, Silver Springs Primary Academy. Two levels of support are being offered. Firstly, advice is being provided to the senior leadership team to ensure management tasks such as monitoring of provision and the use of tracking data are more accurate and rigorous. Secondly at a classroom level, collaborative support is being provided to improve provision in the classroom, notably in the EYFS. Recently, additional support from a national leader of education has been utilised to improve the use of data and help to provide guidance on self-evaluation. Awareness of what needs to be done has been raised but too little time has elapsed to show evidence that this support has had an impact.

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

Yours sincerely

Leszek Iwaskow

**Her Majesty's Inspector**