

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)



17 April 2015

Mrs Natalie Longstaff  
Headteacher  
Britannia Community Primary School  
Rochdale Road  
Bacup  
Lancashire  
OL13 9TS

Dear Mrs Longstaff

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Britannia Community Primary School, Lancashire**

Following my visit to your school on 16 April 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 first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in January 2015. 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 leaders' records of monitoring articulate clearly the impact that teaching has had on the learning of pupils.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, your deputy, the leader of literacy and the special educational needs leader, 11 pupils, seven members of the governing body, including the Chair, and two representatives of the local authority. The school's improvement plan was evaluated. I toured the school with you, visiting each class, and took the opportunity to look at a sample of pupils' books. Together we looked at the monitoring records undertaken by leaders since the inspection of January 2015. I also took into account the 75 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, submitted in the 365 days up to 14 April 2015.

## **Context**

Pupils in Year 6 are currently being taught by the deputy headteacher owing to the absence of the substantive teacher for this class.

## **Main findings**

Your clear understanding of what needs to be done, recognised by inspectors in the January 2015 inspection, goes from strength to strength. As a result, the areas for improvement identified by inspectors, governors and yourself, are being tackled well. Your new deputy headteacher, just one full term in post, is supporting you well with his calm, thoughtful approach.

Teaching quality is improving. Pupils I spoke with recognise the improvements that are being made. They appreciate the clear personal targets which help them to understand better what they need to learn. They also value the demands put on them to ensure they present their work to the best of their ability. Work that I looked at during this inspection shows pupils are right to be positive about these improvements. Teachers now have higher expectations about both the quantity and quality of pupils' work. All pupils who spoke with me agreed they have to work harder now than they did in the past. They do not see this as a burden; on the contrary, they appreciate they are learning more. Your own summary assessments of pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics confirm this view, along with the information leaders have gained from the now more regular pupil progress meetings. Correctly, though, you have ensured no-one is complacent about these improvements. Your identification that the strong subject knowledge of teachers has the potential to improve pupils' learning even further is right. Likewise, you, your staff and your governors recognise all too clearly that progress in writing is less strong than in other aspects. This is because, while pupils use an increasing wide range of vocabulary to make their writing clear and expressive, they are not always correct in their use of spelling, grammar and punctuation. The marking of pupils' work, while improving, does not pick up on these errors as routinely as you would like.

Aided by strong support from your governors and the local authority, leadership is developing well. You have not been afraid to challenge any underperformance. Leaders I spoke with were fulsome in their praise of the way you have challenged and supported them to take on responsibility and be accountable for the achievement of pupils in their subjects and areas. The monitoring records of the leaders for literacy and special educational needs, for example, capture well how teachers and assistants are working with pupils. We all agreed that these records could be improved by leaders articulating clearly the impact that teaching has had on the learning of pupils. The local authority, in its work with leaders, is planning to focus on such detail later this term. Likewise, your own records model such clarity increasingly well.

The sense of empowerment of pupils to achieve as well as one can is palpable. The pupils spoken with, the Junior Leadership Team, for example, know they are trusted by you and your team. This trust gives these pupils the confidence to play a part in the progress the school is making, in providing information to leaders, for example, about how well 'fix it time' is being utilised to help fellow pupils make corrections to work or follow up comments made by teachers.

Your governors were recognised as strong in the January 2015 inspection. The bond of trust between them and you and you and them is equally strong. The relationship is not cosy. Along with the local authority and yourself, governors have been instrumental in helping leadership to develop across the school. Governors' links with leaders, including accompanying the leader for literacy in monitoring activity, has helped them enhance their already keen understanding the school's strengths and areas for development.

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

### **External support**

The local authority has provided strong levels of support and challenge. Its work to develop wider leadership is paying dividends. Representatives of the local authority, like governors and yourself, have a most clear view of what is working well and what needs to be improved. You are also drawing on support from other schools, including those which are outstanding, for example to check the accuracy of assessments and to show teachers in your school what excellent progress in books looks like. The improvements at Britannia show such a strategy is working well.

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

Yours sincerely

Mark Williams

### **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