

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



17 December 2015

Lesley Whittle
Headteacher
Brough Primary School
Church Brough
Kirkby Stephen
Cumbria
CA17 4EW

Dear Mrs Whittle

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Brough Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 9 December 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 June 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 in order to become a good school.

Evidence

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, two subject leaders, a group of pupils and the Chair and vice-chair of the Governing Body, to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I spoke by telephone with the school's local authority adviser and the headteacher of Scotby CofE Primary School, who has been supporting developments in the school. I visited classrooms during lessons, where I looked at a range of pupils' work and spoke to pupils about their learning. I looked at various documents including your school improvement planning, monitoring of teaching and pupils' progress and procedures to safeguard pupils.

Context

Since the last inspection, there has been a reorganisation of leadership responsibilities. A new Chair, vice-chair and clerk of the Governing Body have been appointed.

Main findings

Leaders, governors and staff show determination to tackle areas that require improvement. The last inspection identified the need to improve self-evaluation and improvement planning. Your development planning has been strengthened and is fit for purpose. Planning identifies appropriate actions, which are set within a realistic timescale. You have identified clear measures of success to make sure plans have the intended impact and raise pupils' achievement. The monitoring and evaluation schedule you have established is helpful in identifying how progress within the plan will be checked and to make sure everyone is clear about their role and responsibilities. You are all working together to ensure that improvement plans move forward effectively. Self-evaluation accurately identifies improvements that have been made to leadership and governance but is overly optimistic about the impact it has had on pupils' outcomes to date. You and governors are fully aware, however, of the need to quicken pupils' progress further.

Leadership has been strengthened with your reorganisation of subject leadership. Subject leaders have welcomed the increased responsibility and are leading improvement in their subjects ably. The mathematics and literacy leaders have a detailed understanding of strengths and weaknesses in reading, writing and mathematics, based on their thorough analysis of pupils' progress and attainment, scrutiny of pupils' work and observations of teaching. Their strong subject knowledge has enabled them to draw up detailed subject plans to support improvements in teaching and learning. The implementation of these plans is still at early stages so it is not possible to see the full impact of changes on pupils' outcomes yet.

Governance has been strengthened with the appointment of the new Chair and vice-chair. Governors are ambitious for the school and they are now better placed to provide rigorous challenge and support to school leaders. They have a good understanding of the performance of the school as a result of more regular and detailed reports from leaders at all levels. Governors have a strong drive to get to the school to 'good'; they are rigorously checking that improvement planning is progressing successfully and raising pupils' outcomes.

You are taking appropriate action to tackle the weaker aspects identified in teaching. Work is now being better matched to pupils' ability and age in mathematics. Teachers' focus on mental mathematics across the school is helping pupils to become more proficient in using their knowledge of number to solve problems mentally. The revised approach to teaching reading has introduced more explicit teaching of comprehension skills. Teachers are assessing pupils' writing skills

accurately, which provides a useful starting point to plan for teaching.

During my visits to classes, pupils were concentrating on their work; they appeared at ease and confident to give their views. Those I spoke with said they enjoy school and feel safe. They know they can ask teachers for support if they need it. While some said they would like more football at breaktimes, all were very positive about the friendly and safe environment. They have a good understanding of potential risk, for example the potential risks of running around corners and the need to ensure gates are secure. I spoke with a number of parents at the start of the day. They were positive about the school and felt that their children are happy, feel safe and make good progress.

The changes to leadership and governance are helping to increase capacity in leadership and actions to improve teaching are beginning to make a difference. Pupils are making faster progress in each year group in reading and mathematics and their written work is improving with the increased focus on spelling and handwriting. Leaders recognise that there is more to do to make sure teaching is fully effective in helping pupils to fill gaps in learning so that they work at age-related expectations in every year group. Plans are focused on the right priorities to secure further improvement.

External support

You have made good use of external support. The support from the local authority adviser and the headteacher at Scotby CofE Primary School is having positive impact, particularly in developing leadership and governance. Your participation in the Eden Rural Alliance supports the sharing of good practice and provides access to a broader range of professional 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.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Cumbria. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jean Olsson-Law
Her Majesty's Inspector