

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



6 September 2016

Helen Haynes  
Interim executive headteacher  
Carterknowle Junior School  
Carterknowle Road  
Sheffield  
South Yorkshire  
S7 2DY

Dear Mrs Haynes

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Carterknowle Junior School**

Following my visit to your school on 11 July 2016, 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 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 last section 5 inspection in order to become a good school.

The school should take further action to:

- ensure that the development of teaching results in sustained good progress in each year group and higher outcomes at the end of Year 6, especially in mathematics.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with you, the head of school, assistant headteachers, teachers and teaching assistants to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I met the incoming chair of the governing body for the

federation, and the outgoing chair of the school governing body, who is also a federation governor. I also met a representative of the local authority. I met with parents in the playground at the beginning of the school day and at the open afternoon for parents. I also met with a group of pupils. I observed mathematics lessons in all year groups jointly with the interim executive headteacher. I examined pupils' writing books with senior leaders and considered assessment data. The school improvement plan, the school self-evaluation and local authority progress reports were scrutinised.

## **Context**

The headteacher was absent in the 2015 autumn term and left in December 2015. As headteacher at Holt House Infant School and a local leader of education, you have continued to support the leadership of the school since March 2015. You were appointed as interim executive headteacher from January 2016. At the same time, the deputy headteacher was appointed as head of school. A part-time assistant headteacher was appointed in June 2015 and another for September 2016.

On 1 July 2016, following a consultation, Carterknowle Junior School federated with Holt House Infant School. They remain separate schools but have one governing body and one headteacher. One full-time teacher and two part-time teachers are leaving in August 2016 and two full-time teachers take up post in September 2016.

## **Main findings**

The school has been through an unsettled period. The headteacher's extended absence created uncertainty, staff morale dipped and improvement was slow. You provided valuable support for the deputy headteacher during this time. Together you drew up an action plan in September 2015 which has guided the school effectively this year. Since January 2016, when you were given formal executive responsibility to make changes at the school, the pace of improvement has increased.

During this school year, two consultations were held: one about a new secondary school in the area, and one about the federation. These consultations understandably raised tensions and concerns among parents and the wider community. These changes in school organisation and leadership continue to cause some disquiet among some parents.

The governing body acted responsibly and properly in carrying out the consultation about the federation. The governing bodies of each school met together and separately and held a number of consultation meetings with parents before decisions were reached. The governing body has acted appropriately and in the best interests of the school in making decisions about the leadership of the school. It has taken advice from the local authority and followed fair appointment procedures.

You and the head of school have made marked improvements during the current school year. Leaders have developed a common approach to teaching which has improved the quality of planning and sharpened the focus on learning. Well-targeted professional development has enabled teachers to plan tasks for the full range of abilities more effectively. Teachers know pupils' needs better and focus activities more precisely. Pupils are working with a greater degree of purpose and independence.

You have the full support of staff. Staff rightly value your strong leadership, professional expertise and subject knowledge. Under your direction they are increasing their professional skills and confidence. Your demonstration of teaching techniques has enabled teachers and teaching assistants to learn and apply new skills. Teachers and teaching assistants are planning in a more coordinated way and are more systematically meeting the needs of different groups of pupils. Pupils are positive about the teaching and their progress.

You have tested and evaluated different approaches to assessment this year to meet the demands of the new national curriculum. Your innovative approach details the range of skills to be learned in each subject, each term, in order to assess more precisely and plan work for the wide range of abilities. You have recently adopted a new framework for teaching mathematics which gives teachers more precise guidance. More frequent testing is enabling teachers to analyse weaknesses and to provide more targeted teaching to meet identified needs.

Some developments have only been fully in place since the spring term and have had limited impact on end-of-year attainment in mathematics. The current Year 6 entered the school with above-average attainment. In 2016, attainment at the end of key stage 2 was well above the national average in writing, a little above average in reading and below average in mathematics. Pupils did not make enough progress in mathematics. Evidence from lesson observations and recent teacher assessments indicates that progress in mathematics is beginning to accelerate.

In Years 4 and 5, a lower proportion of pupils are at the levels expected for their age compared to Years 3 and 6. However, assessment indicates that pupils are catching up. The school has not had a reliable assessment system in place for long enough to demonstrate sustained progress over time against the higher expectations of the new national curriculum.

Pupils enjoy mathematics. Tasks are pitched at the right level for the different abilities in the class. Pupils are motivated by the well-structured activities and they work with sustained concentration. Productive dialogue with other pupils develops their explanations and the correct use of mathematical language. They record their reasoning well in both numbers and words. You acknowledge that, on occasion, the most able pupils spend too much time on basic skills.

Teaching is developing pupils' understanding and use of mathematical language effectively. Teachers give pupils clear and repeated examples of the sentences and vocabulary to use in mathematics. As a result, pupils, especially those who speak English as an additional language, learn to give explanations in speech and writing using whole sentences and correct terminology.

Leaders are planning to strengthen pupils' skills and experience in reading. An additional guided reading session is designed for the teaching assistant to consolidate the learning in the teacher's session. Leaders plan to develop the use of the home-school reading diary so that those who do not read enough are identified and supported more actively.

The teaching of writing has a strong focus on teaching grammar and on reading and writing different types of text. Book samples showed pupils making good progress in their writing over the course of the year, including some Pakistani boys with low attainment at the beginning of the year.

### **External support**

Your strong support for leadership is improving the quality of teaching and learning. The local authority has provided constructive evaluations of the school's progress. The local authority has played a helpful role in managing the development of the federation with the partner school.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Sheffield. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Bernard Campbell  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**