

Nord Anglia Inspections
Anglia House
Carrs Road
Cheadle
Stockport SK8 2LA

T 08456 40 40 40
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct T 0161 491 4191
Direct F 0161 491 9677



29 November 2007

Miss Linda McLanachan
Headteacher
Intack Primary School
Whitebirk Road
Blackburn
Lancashire
BB1 3HY

Dear Miss McLanachan

SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF INTACK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Following my visit with Jennie Platt, Additional Inspector, to your school on 27-28 November 2007, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the fourth monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures in March 2006. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – good

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – good

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be posted on the Ofsted website. Please inform the Regional Inspection Service Provider of any factual inaccuracies within 24 hours of the receipt of this letter.

I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the chair of governors the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning, Blackburn and Darwen.

Yours sincerely

Tom Grieveson HMI
H M Inspector

SPECIAL MEASURES: MONITORING OF INTACK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Report from the fourth monitoring inspection on 27-28 November 2007

Evidence

During the visit, inspectors observed lessons in all key stages, and held meetings with the headteacher, middle leaders, the chair of governors and a representative of the local authority (LA). In addition, a meeting was held with school council representatives and informal discussions took place with other staff members and pupils. Relevant documents and samples of pupils' work were examined.

Context

Since the previous visit, and following the promotion of the school's deputy headteacher to a headship elsewhere in the LA, the school has appointed two deputy headteachers. Another teacher has also joined the staff following the retirement of the existing post-holder.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards were reported in detail at the previous inspection visit. Provisional information on the school's performance in 2007 confirms very low standards at Key Stage 1 in all core subjects but particularly in writing. Boys and some pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL) perform least well. Standards at Key Stage 2 in English, mathematics and science improved when compared to the previous year and, while they are still significantly below average overall, the gap is closing. The majority of students made average progress in English and mathematics but significantly better than average progress in science. In contrast to Key Stage 1, pupils identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and EAL pupils performed better than similar pupils nationally. The school's own internal tracking procedures provide further evidence that a higher proportion of pupils are making satisfactory or better progress. The school is increasingly effective in tackling the legacy of underperformance which has affected pupils' achievement over many years.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in March 2006:

- Significantly raise standards and pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy throughout the school – satisfactory

Personal development and well-being

Improvements in pupils' personal development have continued. In lessons, the large majority are attentive and show a keen interest in their studies. Pupils speak with more assurance about the positive behaviour in lessons and outdoor areas. This is helping them to enjoy school and encourages them to attend regularly. The school remains firm in its resolve to improve attendance rates through the maintenance of efficient and robust procedures. Absence is quickly challenged and pupils enjoy the rewards for regular attendance. The school and LA are intent on invoking legal

proceedings against a small minority of families who do not ensure their children's regular attendance. The school is well placed to meet its attendance targets.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in March 2006:

- Continue to raise levels of attendance – satisfactory

Quality of provision

The quality of teaching and learning has improved further. A greater proportion of teaching is now good, as new staffing appointments have added additional experience and expertise at Key Stage 2. Teachers show greater confidence and enjoyment in their work. Classrooms continue to provide a stimulating context for learning and a better use of information and communications technology is leading to sustained engagement in lessons by more pupils and greater interest in their studies. Lesson planning benefits from increasingly detailed assessment information. Teachers are better informed about pupils' progress and in most instances this is helping them to provide activities which meet pupils' needs more consistently. At Key Stage 1, however, tasks are not always sufficiently challenging for the more able pupils because expectations of what these pupils can achieve are not yet high enough. In contrast, at Key Stage 2, where pupils are taught in discrete ability groups, learning for all pupils is generally more effective and progress more evident. The oldest pupils in particular are benefiting from greater challenge and higher expectations of what they should achieve. The use of teaching assistants complements the work of teaching staff well. Most offer very productive support to pupils, but occasionally at the beginning and end of lessons they are not sufficiently involved and opportunities to help pupils fully engage in the learning are missed.

The quality of teachers' marking is better, with more helpful information written in pupils' books. Consequently, pupils show greater understanding of how to improve their work. Literacy and numeracy targets are imaginatively displayed in classrooms and these are used by more teachers routinely within lessons to identify the progress being made. Pupils consider that the use of these targets increases their motivation to work hard.

Modifications to the organisation of the curriculum have been introduced since the previous visit. While an emphasis on the discrete teaching of core skills has been maintained, teachers now plan learning so that different subjects are linked more directly where this is appropriate. Dedicated daily reading workshops, to tackle longstanding weaknesses in this area, have been established. These new developments are working well, although implementation is too recent to evaluate their impact on pupils' achievement and standards. Nonetheless, early indications are positive and pupils enjoy the activities afforded by these new initiatives.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in March 2006:

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning and raise teachers' expectations of what pupils are able to do, including their capacity to work independently – satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 and good progress in the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 2

- Ensure systems for marking pupils' work, tracking their progress and informing future targets are in place and consistently used across the school – good
- Ensure work set meets the needs of pupils and programmes to raise achievement are put into place – good
- Urgently ensure all staff are trained in child protection procedures—This is no longer an issue.

Leadership and management

The overall quality of leadership and management has continued to improve. The senior team has been further strengthened by the appointment of two deputy headteachers. The headteacher's effective leadership and forthright approach has ensured that the momentum to improve the school has been maintained. She has been successful in driving improvements in a number of areas. Significant effort has been employed to manage important changes to the curriculum. Appropriate professional development is provided to ensure that staff are ready to implement these changes well. Consequently, staff show a greater confidence in their work and in their collective capacity to raise standards and ensure the needs of pupils are met.

The monitoring and evaluation of teaching have continued and are now routine. Senior staff have an accurate understanding of the relative strengths and weaknesses in classrooms and this knowledge provides a strong basis from which to intervene to increase the proportion of good teaching in all parts of the school. The capacity of middle leaders has continued to strengthen. Clarification of their role has been extended through the production of subject action plans; consequently subject leaders have a better understanding of what is expected of them. Their knowledge of the relative strengths and weaknesses of individual subjects has improved and they are better able to intervene and support teachers to make further progress.

The accumulation of performance information and the tracking of pupils' progress have continued. Staff have a broad range of information which is helping them to appreciate how well pupils are performing and to track their progress more accurately. Intervention to help underachieving pupils to improve is well coordinated. Further work to assess children's attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage is ongoing to make certain that their needs are understood and their progress is monitored accurately.

Good progress has been made to improve the effectiveness of the governing body. The governors assert greater autonomy and independence in their work. The chair of governors, in particular, demonstrates a keen knowledge of the school's performance, not least because of the better information supplied by the staff. Governors remain resolute in their support of the school, but rigorous in holding staff accountable for its performance.

Progress on the areas for improvement identified by the inspection in March 2006:

- Develop the capacity of the school's leadership, and implement monitoring and evaluation to provide an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses – good

External support

The LA's support continues to be effective and increasingly proportionate to the needs of the school. Time given by LA officers has further reduced and is evidence of their continued confidence in the school's leadership to manage its own improvement. Effective ongoing work, through the Intensifying Support Programme and to support pupils who have EAL, continues. In addition, some external funding is still provided and is proving to be effective.