

CfBT Inspection Services
Suite 22
West Lancashire Investment
Centre
Maple View
White Moss Business Park
Skelmersdale
WN8 9TG

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

Direct T 01695 566 939
Direct F 01695 729 320
glaw@ofsted.gov.uk



22 January 2008

Mrs M Rhodes
Headteacher
Hatfield Primary School
Hatfield House Lane
Sheffield
South Yorkshire
S5 6HY

Dear Mrs Rhodes

Ofsted monitoring of schools with a notice to improve

Thank you for the help you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 21 January 2008, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information you provided before and during my visit. Please also pass on my thanks to the pupils, the chair of governors and the local authority adviser for making the time to talk with me.

This letter 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.

As a result of the inspection in May 2007, the school was asked to address the following issues.

- Raise standards and improve achievement in English and mathematics in Years 1 to 6.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning to ensure that it is consistently strong enough to raise standards.
- Establish rigorous systems to monitor pupils' progress and to help teachers eradicate underachievement.
- Consistently use tracking and marking to set challenging targets to improve pupils' achievement.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making satisfactory progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising pupils' achievement.

Since the inspection in May 2007, the deputy headteacher and a class teacher have started maternity leave. The deputy headteacher's absence is being covered by an associate headteacher who provides support at senior level. The school has formed a

learning partnership with a local, successful school. Such an arrangement is part of the local authority's strategy for promoting improvement in schools which have a notice to improve. Since September the school has had a new school improvement adviser.

Since the last inspection, the results of the 2007 statutory assessments and tests have become available. They reveal a mixed picture, but there are some encouraging signs at Key Stage 2. The results show that standards at both key stages were still very low. At Key Stage 1, the 2007 results were lower than those in 2006, especially in reading and writing. However, several pupils in that group had joined the school during the course of the key stage and were at an early stage of learning to speak English. This contributed to the lower results. At Key Stage 2, results in English, mathematics and science were all higher than in 2006. This increase represents improved achievement compared with the previous year. Pupils' achievement was broadly satisfactory in English and science, but it remained inadequate in mathematics and, because of this, was inadequate overall.

The school has worked hard to put appropriate arrangements in place for measuring pupils' standards and evaluating their progress on a regular basis. The performance of each pupil in relation to refined National Curriculum levels in reading, writing and mathematics and the progress individuals have made is now assessed and recorded each half term. Senior leaders discuss the outcomes with each class teacher. The second assessment each term is entered on a computerised system designed to check and analyse how individuals and groups are doing across a range of criteria. Although at a very early stage, these systems provide a suitable means of tracking pupils' progress and identifying underachievement earlier than previously.

The resulting information is being used to improve pupils' achievement in a variety of ways. At the half-termly progress discussions, any pupils in danger of not attaining the standard expected for their age or not progressing as expected are identified, and a decision about what action will be taken is made. This action is usually some form of intensive support in small groups outside of the classroom. The information recorded termly on the computerised system is beginning to be analysed by the associate headteacher, including by subject, class, year group, ethnicity and by different ability groups. Because the data have only been available for a short time, the analysis is not yet complete. The school recognises the need to ensure that the analysis is more comprehensive and completed more quickly to maximise the time available to act upon it. Nevertheless, the analysis to date means that the school has a better knowledge than in the past of how pupils are performing and progressing and this is enabling it to take more informed action to promote improvement. Early indications are that some groups are reasonably on course for meeting their end-of-year targets. However, there are inconsistencies, for example across year groups and with some higher-attaining pupils making less progress than others.

A positive use of the data is that all pupils are now set challenging targets in reading, writing and mathematics. Although these targets were only recently introduced, pupils know how they are currently performing and what they need to do to reach the next level. They find this detail helpful and motivational. The targets are being used to have a more informed dialogue with parents, which they welcome.

Action is being taken to improve the quality of teaching by tackling specific aspects with individual teachers and through general training and development for all staff. Two areas have received specific attention. The use of targets, both for individuals and groups, features more prominently in planning for and dialogue about teaching and learning. This has increased the extent to which tasks are designed to meet the full range of needs in a class. However, practice is still variable. In some lessons, tasks for pupils of different ability are explicitly set at different National Curriculum levels to ensure appropriate challenge for all. In others, tasks are still not precisely targeted, often resulting in a lack of challenge for higher-attaining pupils. A new policy was adopted in November to improve the effectiveness of marking. A key feature is that marking should identify the next steps in learning for pupils. This has had a positive impact, with some marking now giving clear and detailed feedback to pupils on how to improve their work. However, not all teachers are doing this.

The local authority's statement of action fulfils Ofsted's requirements. Initially, the school's progress was slow, in part due to some lack of clarity about relative roles and responsibilities between the headteacher, the associate headteacher and the learning partnership school. Following clarification, all partners are now working effectively together with an escalation in the rate of progress. The associate headteacher is providing helpful support and leadership on key issues in the school. Local authority personnel have provided good advice and guidance. This, along with the supplementary support provided through the learning partnership, is proving valuable to the school.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school.

Yours sincerely

Joan McKenna
Additional Inspector