

CfBT Inspection Services
Suite 22
West Lancs Investment Centre
Maple View
Skelmersdale
WN8 9TG

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

Direct T 01695 566932
Direct F 01695 729320
hcarnall@cfbt.com



6 June 2008

Mrs Helen Cockerham
The Acting Headteacher
Wykebeck Primary School
Brander Street
Leeds
West Yorkshire
LS9 6QH

Dear Mrs Cockerham

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 5 June 2008, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. It was particularly useful that you were able to arrange meetings with all key people who have been instrumental in supporting improvements since your last inspection.

This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

As a result of the inspection on 17 and 18 January 2007, the school was asked to: ensure that the monitoring of teaching focuses closely on pupils' progress in lessons and is fully effective in improving the pace of learning so pupils do as well as they can; and to make better use of assessment information to set challenging targets and also when planning lessons in order to raise standards and achievement throughout the school.

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

The school now works in close partnership with the local authority. Local authority officers have been instrumental in supporting and challenging the school in its drive to raise standards and improve provision for pupils.

Following the resignation of the headteacher in July 2007, governors were unsuccessful in their first attempt to secure a permanent replacement from September 2007. In the interim, the deputy headteacher willingly accepted responsibility as acting headteacher. Under her sensitive and determined guidance, together with high quality, targeted support from the local authority, an effective leadership team was developed and is now in place. This team has been instrumental in bringing about the much needed improvement to: leadership and

management; the quality of teaching and learning; use of assessment data together with achievement and standards. The local authority, in conjunction with the governing body, has been instrumental in recruiting a substantive headteacher with effect from September 2008.

In 2007, results of the end of key stage national assessments and tests were below average and pupils' achievement was at its lowest for many years. Work seen during the monitoring visit and the data held on pupils' individual progress indicate that progress is currently satisfactory overall but improved at the end of both key stages.

Members of the leadership team, with guidance and support from the local authority school improvement adviser and the intensifying support programme (ISP) consultant, monitor the work of teachers in classrooms. A particular strength in this area has been the work of leading teachers for mathematics and assessment in the school. They are instrumental in providing much needed guidance for class teachers, governors and other school leaders. Coaching for teachers, particularly in Key Stage 2, is now offered as a result of classroom monitoring. For example, the leading mathematics teacher conducts demonstration numeracy lessons for colleagues in their own classes. Indeed the school now has a sufficient group of teachers who are consistently able to deliver good and outstanding lessons. Features of these successful lessons include high expectations and consistently good rates of progress made by pupils. Consequently, there is an increasingly positive profile of teaching in the school, with no lesson judged below satisfactory. Identified weaknesses in teaching are now the focus for staff training and individual support for teachers. Monitoring of pupils' learning in lessons has only recently been the focus of observations so that the variation in rates of pupils' progress has not always been spotted quickly enough. In the autumn term the ISP consultant is to work alongside identified teachers with an emphasis on pupils' learning. The school operates a system of setting pupils by ability. This has been successful in raising attainment for the more able pupils but the school is to review its effectiveness in relation to the attainment of the average and less able pupils.

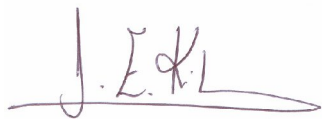
The school has recently made much needed improvement to the assessment and pupil tracking systems. This is being implemented effectively by the leading teacher for assessment, in consultation with the local authority. As a result, good quality information about pupils' progress is regularly scrutinised by subject leaders and the leadership team. There is now a corporate acceptance by all staff of their roles and responsibilities in raising standards and levels of achievement throughout school. This has been secured through the work of the ISP consultant, principally through the termly raising attainment plans. The leading teacher for assessment coordinates this initiative, ensuring all in school are fully involved and accountable. Termly progress interviews enable older pupils to discuss their next steps in learning with their teachers. Increasingly, teachers use the plenary sessions in literacy and numeracy lessons to allow pupils to feedback on their learning. This ranges from an effective traffic light system to a simple 'thumbs up' strategy allowing pupils to indicate their understanding of the concepts being taught. Marking of pupils' work refers to targets but is by no means consistent throughout the school.

The local authority early years advanced skills teacher is working with Foundation Stage staff. The focus has been to promote greater continuity and to formulate a consistent assessment and recording system in the Foundation Stage.

Assessment information is now more evident in teachers' planning, particularly for the more able where there is a much higher level of challenge. Underperformance of girls, identified by the leadership team, is being tackled successfully through focused teaching in Years 5 and 6. A cycle of assessment and review of planning is leading to a closer match between pupils' abilities and the work set. Pupils' targets are now frequently reviewed in a school where high expectations are becoming increasingly embedded in the school's ethos.

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

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. E. Kilner", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

James Kilner
Her Majesty's Inspector