

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 566930
Direct F 01695 729320



3 February 2010

Ms Julie Harkness
Headteacher
Bracken Edge Primary School
Newton Road
Leeds
West Yorkshire
LS7 4HE

Dear Ms Harkness

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools

Thank you for the help which you, your staff and governors gave when I inspected your school on 2 February 2010, for the time you gave to our discussions and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. Please pass on my thanks to the pupils who made me so welcome.

There have been a number of changes of staff and governors since the last inspection in March 2008. The school moved into a new building in July 2008. In addition, the headteacher took maternity leave during the autumn term 2009. The composition of the pupil population has also changed, with an increasing number of pupils, particularly from the African continent, who are new to the country and new to the English language.

As a result of the inspection on 10 and 11 March 2008, the school was asked to:

- raise standards in Key Stage 1
- broaden the curriculum in Years 1 and 2 so that pupils have more opportunities to learn practically through exploring and finding out for themselves
- increase the proportion of good and better teaching so as to accelerate pupils' progress throughout the school
- improve the use of assessment so that teachers plan work that meets the needs of the different age and ability groups in their classes.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school has made satisfactory progress in making improvements and satisfactory progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.



Pupils' achievement is improving. There has been a steady rise in attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 and the gap between the school's results and the national average is narrowing. At the end of Key Stage 2, a greater number of pupils are attaining the higher levels in English and mathematics. However, attainment remains below national averages in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of both key stages. Work in pupils' books at Key Stage 1 shows an increased rate of learning and more ground is covered. This is the result of better systems to assess progress, to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills and to set targets to improve learning and progress. The progress of pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language is increasing gradually. This is due to carefully targeted support from teaching assistants in lessons and in small groups. The effectiveness of this support is monitored closely and provision is becoming more finely tuned to meet individual needs. In lessons, progress is improving more rapidly for all the pupils when they have opportunities to become involved in practical activities and when there is time for them to think and talk about what they are learning.

There has been some improvement to the curriculum, but in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in upper Key Stage 2 it remains broader than in Years 1 to 4 and offers wider and more practical experiences. Opportunities for activity and investigational work are improving slowly throughout the school, particularly through themes incorporating different subject areas. However, there are also examples in mathematics and English when pupils are encouraged to find different ways to solve problems or to increase their understanding and language skills through drama. As a result, their involvement and interest is growing and their progress is accelerating. Access to information and communication technology (ICT) has increased, with greater opportunity for pupils to demonstrate their understanding by using the interactive whiteboard. However, pupils' use of ICT to research or to record their work remains limited.

The school's own monitoring and evaluation indicate that the quality of teaching is improving. Observations made during the inspection confirm this. Teaching is increasingly effective when pupils are quickly and fully involved by the teacher. The pace of learning remains slow when pupils spend too long listening or when they do not understand what they are being asked to do. More effective management of behaviour, through swifter positive intervention, is improving pupils' engagement and focus on learning. Teachers are making better use of assessment data to plan lessons more closely matched to the needs of all the pupils within the class. However, this is still not entirely consistent because at times activities remain too challenging. The quality of marking is better and clearer feedback is given to pupils on how to improve their work. Where teaching is improving more rapidly, teachers or teaching assistants are assessing pupils' understanding as the lesson progresses. They are then using their assessments to modify the lesson to tackle misunderstandings or gaps in pupils' knowledge. Opportunities for pupils to assess for themselves how well they have done and how to improve, remain underdeveloped throughout the school.



The local authority has provided effective and valued support to the school over some years. However, both the school and the local authority recognise that for greater capacity to be built, the school's leaders and governors need to determine for themselves which are the key changes required to accelerate improvement. This is underpinned by leaders' growing ambition for the school and their clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and of what now needs to be done.

This monitoring inspection included a check on the school's safeguarding procedures and found them to be secure and meeting current requirements.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Liz Godman
Additional inspector



