

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

T 0300 123 1231  
Text Phone: 0161 6188524 Direct T 01695 566930  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk Direct F 01695 729320  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk) Direct email: gtunncliffe@cftb.com

13 May 2010

Mrs Christine Harvey  
Headteacher  
Pontefract the Rookeries Carleton Junior and Infant School  
Carleton Road  
Pontefract  
West Yorkshire  
WF8 3NP

Dear Mrs Harvey

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Pontefract the Rookeries  
Carleton Junior and Infant School

Following my visit with Naila Zaffar, Additional Inspector, to your school on 11 and 12 May 2010, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures in November 2009. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – satisfactory

Newly Qualified Teachers may not be appointed.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be posted on the Ofsted website.

I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Interim Executive Board and the Director of Family Services for Wakefield.

Yours sincerely

Liz Godman  
Lead Inspector

Special measures: monitoring of Pontefract the Rookeries Carleton Junior and Infant School

Report from the first monitoring inspection on 11 and 12 May 2010

## Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with a group of pupils, the headteacher and executive headteacher, the former Chair of the Governing Body, the Chair of the Interim Executive Board and a representative of the local authority.

## Context

Since the inspection in November 2009, two teachers are absent from the school on a long -term basis and their classes are covered by two temporary teachers. An executive headteacher and staff from a National Support School joined the school at the start of the spring term for three days a week to work alongside the headteacher and staff. Approval has been given for the establishment of an Interim Executive Board, which met for the first time on 11 May 2010.

## Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning

The rate of pupils' progress in lessons continues to vary from class to class and remains slow overall. However, there are some signs of improvement, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Here progress is better because there is a sharper match of activities to meet the full range of needs within the class. In these years, pupils are more actively involved in speaking and listening as a whole class, in small groups and in paired discussions. This has resulted in improved communication skills. In the Year 6 class, progress has accelerated, particularly in English and mathematics as a result of intensive and targeted support. Gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills have been filled following careful assessment and intervention. These pupils are also more confident in articulating their views and feelings and in explaining what they have learned. The deaf and hearing impaired pupils in the school's resource provision continue to make rapid progress, particularly in developing their literacy and communication skills. This is because the resource provision staff are highly skilled in identifying and meeting pupils' needs. The school has rightly focused on raising attainment in literacy as part of a staged approach to improving pupils' skills across all areas of the curriculum. However, the impact of this approach on pupils' achievement remains patchy, both in literacy and in other subjects throughout the school. This monitoring inspection found no indications of different rates of progress for pupils of different abilities, but found that for all pupils their rates of progress are directly dependent upon the quality of teaching they receive.

Progress since the last inspection on the areas for improvement:

- raise achievement and standards in all subjects, by:

- ensuring that all lessons lead to good or better progress for all pupils
- increasing the opportunities for pupils to reflect on their learning in lessons
- making lessons more challenging, particularly for pupils of middle and high ability
- improving the curriculum so that pupils have more opportunities to develop their literacy skills, including speaking and listening, across all subjects – satisfactory

### Other relevant pupil outcomes

Pupils continue to behave well and enjoy coming to school. They remain friendly and polite to one another, staff and visitors. The improved speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills of the older pupils means they are better prepared for secondary school than at the time of the last inspection. In addition, the lessons planned to enable them to reflect on changes in their lives and on their feelings about moving to secondary school, have boosted their confidence and have added to this improvement.

### The effectiveness of provision

There have been slight improvements in the quality of teaching, primarily for pupils in upper Key Stage 2. Some lessons are increasingly engaging because there are more opportunities for pupils to be involved and to talk about their learning. Teaching is strongest within the resource provision for deaf pupils. Here teaching is characterised by highly effective communication between staff and pupils and by high quality and relevant resources which secure pupils' involvement and desire to express their ideas and understanding. However, there remain too many lessons in the main part of the school where the teachers talks for too long. Although all lessons have objectives which are shared with pupils, these vary in the extent to which they are specific, challenging and matched to the needs of all pupils in the class. Consequently, the pace of learning is not accelerating for all pupils. On occasion too, the pupils or the teacher go off track and so are distracted from the focus of the lesson. In many lessons, pupils remain unclear as to what they have to do to demonstrate their success. In some lessons, time is set aside during or at the end of the lesson for pupils to reflect on their learning and to gain in understanding of what they have learned. In others, such time continues to be rushed or overlooked and so opportunities are lost to increase the rate of learning. As a result, pupils are still unable to assess for themselves how well they have done and what they need to do next. More accurate assessments undertaken across the school mean that teachers are better placed to plan work more sharply matched to the needs of pupils at all levels of attainment within the class. This has yet to be put into effect to improve learning in every class and so inconsistencies persist in the quality of teaching.

Work in pupils' books shows that in some classes, particularly for Years 2 and 6, pupils receive better advice and guidance on how to improve their work. In Year 6, this is clear and consistent in books for English and mathematics and is a key factor in the improved progress of these pupils. This is also the case in English in Year 2. There are signs that the accuracy and consistency of marking have started to improve, although this is by no means secure in all subjects in all classes.

The school has taken some suitable steps to improve the curriculum. It recognises that central to this is ensuring that the curriculum meets pupils' needs and enables them to make better progress in their learning and in the development of their basic skills. Care, guidance and support continue to meet pupils' needs.

Progress since the last inspection on the areas for improvement:

- improve the quality of teaching and assessment, by:
  - ensuring lessons are engaging and well matched to the needs of all pupils
  - identifying more opportunities to assess pupils in lessons
  - sharpening the quality of advice and guidance given to pupils so they are left in no doubt how they should improve their work
  - improving the accuracy, consistency and quality of marking across the school – satisfactory.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Leaders and managers now have a clear understanding of where the school's strengths and weaknesses lie. This is because they have made accurate evaluations of the quality of teaching. However, where areas for improvement have been identified for individual teachers, follow-up to ensure these have been addressed remains at a very early stage of development. Similarly, recent assessments of what pupils know and can do are sharper and clearer and mean that the school has more reliable data to share with staff. The extent to which staff know how to use this information to plan precise next steps for pupils in their class, continues to be inconsistent. An example of improved assessment and planning is in Year 6. Here clearer identification of needs has enabled provision to be matched more closely and so has closed gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills and has increased their progress. There is a more suitable school development plan, which is sharply focused on the stages required to secure the necessary changes. Progress with the plan is monitored regularly. However, there has been some instability in staffing and inconsistencies in the quality of teaching persist. Leaders and managers recognise that greater stability and more consistently improved teaching are key priorities for accelerating the speed at which the school moves forward. The school has organised a series of staff meetings on developing teaching and learning. These have covered a lot of ground. Consequently, the extent to which teachers have been able to take all of this on board has been variable and in some cases limited. The school now recognises that a more step-by-step approach, linked to follow-up monitoring and

support, is needed. There are examples of good and better teaching, on which to build, both within the school and also from the support school. However, as yet, there is considerably more work to do to develop capacity and understanding so that this can be used by all staff to secure consistent improvement across all classes.

This monitoring inspection included a check on the school's safeguarding arrangements and found them to meet requirements.

The very recent establishment of the Interim Executive Board means that its members are at the very early stages of getting to know the school in detail. Consequently, they are not yet in a position to hold the school to account for its effectiveness.

Progress since the last inspection on the areas for improvement:

- ensure leaders and managers drive improvements by:
  - ensuring monitoring and evaluation systems are accurate in identifying the school's strengths and weaknesses
  - ensuring that the school development plans are precise in addressing improvements
  - establishing consistency of practice across all classrooms, so that good and outstanding practice is shared
  - enabling staff to understand assessment data and use it effectively in the classroom to plan work which challenges all pupils
  - giving governors more accurate information about the school so that they are in a better position to hold it to account for its effectiveness – satisfactory

### External support

The local authority's statement of action to support the school meets requirements. The local authority has been instrumental in securing the help of the National Support School. This school's input is proving effective and has been a significant factor in securing improvements, many of which stem from the start of the support school's involvement in the last three months. This has started to make a difference for pupils. During these months, the partnership has grown between the support school and the local authority's teaching and learning consultant. This is helping to provide the consistent messages necessary to drive improvement. The local authority's school improvement adviser has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and is vigilant in assisting the school in taking the required steps for improvement.

### Priorities for further improvement

- The priorities for improvement remain those identified by the inspection in November 2009.