

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
Direct email: gtunncliffe@cfbt.com



25 June 2010

Mrs Helen York
Headteacher
Christ Church Pellon CE (VC) Primary School
Sandbeds Road
Pellon
Halifax
West Yorkshire
HX2 0QQ

Dear Mrs York

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Christ Church Pellon CE (VC) Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 23 and 24 June 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 second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures in September 2009. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – satisfactory
Progress since previous monitoring inspection – satisfactory

Newly qualified teachers may be appointed subject to discussions with HMI.

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 Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Calderdale.

Yours sincerely

Amraz Ali
Her Majesty's Inspector



Special measures: monitoring inspection of Christ Church Pellon CE (VC) Primary School

Report from the second monitoring inspection on 23 and 24 June 2010

Evidence

The inspector visited 11 lessons. He scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, staff, groups of pupils, the local authority School Improvement Partner, the Chair of the Governing Body and the two parents' champions.

Context

Since the last inspection there have been some changes to the school's context. Following a review of the staffing structure the temporary assistant headteacher post has been made permanent and the temporary teacher on secondment from another local school was successful in securing this post. One teacher has been unwell and absent from duty for some weeks and the class is being taught by a supply teacher. Three teachers have resigned their posts from the end of this term and one teacher has requested that her contract becomes a part-time post. The local authority has made available additional funds to allow the school to appoint an additional member of staff to cover for any teachers' absences. The school has recruited two experienced teachers and HMI has agreed that the school can appoint up to two newly qualified teachers to the remaining vacant posts on condition that appropriate support is provided for these teachers. A new local authority governor has been appointed and there is currently a full complement of governors.

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

The school's most recent assessments indicate that attainment in the current Year 6 and Year 2 is generally improving. In Year 2, for example, reading results are on track to be better than the previous year and in Year 6 attainment at the higher Level 5 in English and mathematics is on track to be better than in 2009. The close tracking and regular assessments of pupils' levels continues to demonstrate that rates of progress are continuing to improve. However, attainment and progress across the school remain variable and often relate directly to variation in the quality of teaching or to the recent disruption of teaching due to staff absence. The best rates of progress are found where teaching is strongest and where there has been continuity of teaching staff.

The school has correctly identified the need to make sure that teachers' ongoing assessments are accurate and reliable. Inspection evidence confirms the accuracy of some of the writing assessments. The use of targets is continuing to develop but their use and impact across the school remains inconsistent. Although some pupils know that they have targets they do not yet readily recall them. The implementation

of letters and sounds within the Reception and Key Stage 1 classes is continuing and the school's records show clearly that this work is having a positive impact on pupils' knowledge of letter sounds and their reading ability.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- raise pupils' attainment in English and mathematics in both key stages, by rigorously tracking pupils' progress and intervening when pupils make insufficient progress; developing the programme for learning sounds and letters in Key Stage 1; improve opportunities for pupils to write more extensively – satisfactory

Other relevant pupil outcomes

There have been some positive developments with the school's approach to managing the behaviour of pupils. Following an audit and consultation with pupils, parents, carers and governors a new whole-school approach has been introduced. This is now well understood by pupils and is being implemented in all classrooms. Pupils say that it is fair, they are all able to earn rewards and they understand the consequences of inappropriate behaviour. As a result, pupils and staff believe that behaviour is continuing to improve. Classroom observations confirm that behaviour in lessons is never less than satisfactory and sometimes good. However, pupils and staff state that the disruption of lessons by misbehaviour has not been totally eliminated. Although the agreed behaviour management strategies are now being more consistently implemented, there remain some pupils who have yet to change totally their habits of being easily distracted and not fully concentrating. Additionally, some low level misbehaviour is still evident where pupils are kept listening to their teachers for too long. Where pupils have been identified as having social, emotional or behavioural needs they are generally well supported and staff ensure that any misbehaviour is managed appropriately.

Behaviour observed on the playground, in the dining room and as pupils move around the school was never less than satisfactory and was often good. Pupils say they have no concerns about bullying or their personal safety. The number of pupils excluded has decreased, when compared to the same period last year and compared to the previous term.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- improve pupils' behaviour by ensuring that all staff adhere to the policy for managing behaviour and ensuring that pupils' disruptive behaviour does not impede the learning of others – satisfactory



The effectiveness of provision

The quality of teaching observed on this visit ranged from good to satisfactory and none was judged to be inadequate. This is a better situation than at the previous visit. Although it has improved and there is evidence that some common strengths are becoming routine, it is still not strong enough across the whole school to ensure that all pupils make the progress that they should do and there remains further work to be done. Almost all lessons start promptly and are purposeful. Learning objectives are routinely shared with pupils. The most successful lessons have a good pace and the expectations of teachers make clear to pupils exactly how much work has to be produced in a given time; usually over very short periods of time. However, the learning in some lessons slows where this practice is not followed. Additionally, in some lessons pupils are still spending too much time listening to their teachers and not enough time on tasks.

A particular focus of this visit was on the planning of activities to meet the full range of learners' needs within each classroom. Although there were some good examples of teachers effectively planning well-thought-out activities at just the right level for each group within their classes, this was not common in every class. Sometimes the same tasks continue to be presented to all members of the class and rely on pupils being provided with extra adult help and support. An emerging strength is the regular and effective marking of pupils' work, particularly in English and mathematics; work is routinely assessed against the planned learning intentions and where appropriate useful ways for pupils to improve their work are offered. However, the practice of allowing pupils to respond or reflect upon their teacher's comments is not fully developed. Planning is variable in terms of the level of detail and precision of challenge and timings; the school has correctly identified that this is an area for further development.

Observations of learning in the Reception class confirm that many of the strengths that were identified in the last inspection have been maintained; notably the good relationships, care and development of independent learning skills. The school is aware of some of the limitations of the outdoor space available to the Reception class, mainly related to the lack of a large level area. Although the outdoor space is used well to provide children with access to a good range of natural resources along with opportunities for physical development, there remain aspects that are not fully developed, for example, opportunities to read, write and count outside.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- improve the quality of teaching and learning, by making effective use of the assessment information to provide work which closely matches pupils' needs and increasing the pace of lessons and setting much higher expectations for the amount and quality of work completed in lessons – satisfactory



The effectiveness of leadership and management

The work of the senior leadership team, collectively and independently, is beginning to have a positive impact. The most notable successes are the development of the whole-school behaviour management policy by the deputy headteacher and the action to reduce persistent absenteeism which was led by the assistant headteacher in her role as inclusion manager. The work of senior leaders in developing the quality of teaching is having a similarly positive effect and is helping to ensure that improvements are steadily continuing. The close monitoring of lessons, along with the regular scrutiny of pupils' books, means that senior leaders know exactly where there are strengths and where further work is needed. There have been some developments with the role of leaders outside the leadership team and there are clear plans to develop the role of subject leaders. For example, by introducing a standard subject leader file, which provides a well structured framework, their roles have been clarified and the range of tasks they need to undertake along with the annual time frame within which they should be completed have been identified. However, this is yet to be fully implemented. Although there are clear strengths within the Early Years Foundation Stage, the leadership of this area of the school is underdeveloped in demonstrating how provision is being improved.

The leadership team are realistic about the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead; particularly with the forthcoming changes of staff within Key Stage 2. They have, for example, correctly identified the need to ensure that all new colleagues are quickly brought up to speed with the school's systems for planning lessons, for managing pupils' behaviour and marking. The two parents' champions are keen to develop their role in improving communications between the school and parents and carers. They have begun to arrange well attended meetings and coffee mornings and state that communications are improving, but they have identified the need for more notice for some school events, such as sports days and parents' evenings.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- develop effective delegation within the senior management team by ensuring that all members play an active role in school improvement – satisfactory

External support

Support for the school has been satisfactory. Following the last visit the local authority has acted to recruit a new governor. The local authority has continued to provide staff training and funding for additional staff.