

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

T 0300 123 1231  
Text Phone: 0161 6188524  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

Direct T 01695 566934  
Direct F 01695 729320  
Direct email [gtunnickliffe@cfbt.com](mailto:gtunnickliffe@cfbt.com)



20 May 2010

Mrs Mandy Pickles  
Headteacher  
Ackton Pastures Primary School  
College Grove  
Whitwood  
Castleford  
West Yorkshire  
WF10 5NS

Dear Mrs Pickles

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Ackton Pastures Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 18–19 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 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.

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 Children's Services for Wakefield.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Keeler  
Her Majesty's Inspector

Special measures: monitoring of Ackton Pastures Primary School

Report from the second monitoring inspection on 18–19 May 2010

## Evidence

Ten lessons were observed during the course of the inspection. Meetings were held with the headteacher, subject leaders, the Chair of the Interim Executive board (IEB) and a representative from the local authority.

## Context

The substantive headteacher at the time of the previous inspection has been absent since November 2009 due to ill health. An acting headteacher commenced at the beginning of the spring term 2010 and will continue in post until July 2011. A new deputy headteacher has been appointed and will take up her duties on 01 September 2010 following the retirement of the current temporary post holder.

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

Attainment is low and the progress that pupils make is still not good enough. However, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are making better progress now than they were at the time of the previous monitoring inspection and certainly much improved progress since the Ofsted inspection last year. This is particularly evident in Years 5 and 6 and is supported by evidence gained through lesson observations, teachers' assessment and an analysis of data collected and analysed by the school in relation to English, mathematics and science.

Progress since the last visit on the area for improvement:

- Increase the rate of pupils' progress and raise the standards in English, mathematics and science in both key stages – satisfactory.

## Other relevant outcomes for pupils

Pupils enjoy attending school. They demonstrate generally satisfactory and often good behaviour during lessons and as they move around the school. Pupils listen to their teachers, respond positively to questions and remain focused on their work during lessons. This is because activities are now better matched to their learning needs and the targeted support given by teaching assistants is increasingly well focused. The quality of the learning environment has improved significantly since the beginning of the year. Structural alterations in the Early Years Foundation Stage have effectively maximised the learning opportunities for all pupils. Stimulating displays of pupils' work are now the norm and this is enhancing pupils' self-esteem.

## The effectiveness of provision

The school's leadership team is working hard to raise the quality of teaching and learning. Teachers' expectations are rising; lesson planning is improving as is the deployment and management of teaching assistants. Teachers have a clear understanding of what they want their pupils to learn during the lesson. Relationships between pupils and adults are good. Some teachers use assessment to inform planning well but this practice is not the norm across the school. The quality of marking has improved since the previous monitoring visit and some, particularly in Years 5 and 6, is extremely good, giving recognition to pupils' efforts and pointers for improvement. Pupils are aware of their targets and this is helping to focus their minds on improving their work. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is also improving. The quality of individual education plans is good with clearly attainable and measurable learning goals.

Overall, the quality of teaching is improving and this is reflected in increased progress by pupils. However, as teachers respond to the changes and expectations introduced by senior management, the gap between good and satisfactory or inadequate teaching is becoming increasingly apparent. Differences include organisation and management of classrooms, expectations regarding the quality and quantity of pupils' work produced during lessons and the use of assessment during lessons, all of which inhibit progress. Good tracking systems are in place to monitor pupils' progress. Teachers' assessment over time is being used to identify pupils requiring additional support and the intervention programmes that follow are enhancing pupils' progress.

Progress since the last visit on the area for improvement:

- Increase the rate of pupils' progress and raise the standards in English, mathematics and science in both key stages by:
  - improving the quality of teaching
  - developing assessment procedures – satisfactory.

## The effectiveness of leadership and management

The acting headteacher is providing good leadership by driving improvement through the development of teaching and learning. Following a period of inadequate progress, the school has now made up lost ground and improvements are beginning to affect pupils' progress positively. Credit should be given to the staff as a whole who have demonstrated a commitment to the improvement process and come together to provide good support to the present leaders. The school improvement plan is a useful document and reflects the major issues highlighted at the previous inspection. Initiatives designed to address areas of weakness are appropriate with realistic timescales. Subject and phase leaders feel appreciated and empowered. They are developing a better understanding of their roles and beginning to make a valuable contribution to raising attainment. Action plans are in place based on an

audit of need and arrangements to monitor provision and outcomes in terms of pupils' performance have commenced. The IEB met for the first time following the previous monitoring inspection. Roles and responsibilities have been assigned with members responsible for monitoring different strands of the school improvement plan. As a result, the IEB is increasingly holding the school to account. The Chair of the IEB is actively seeking to secure the long-term leadership of the school and has taken steps to place the school on a more stable financial footing. The single central register meets current government requirements. Further improvements to safeguarding have been made including revised child protection procedures and staff training, a review of school premises and a whole-school policy regarding risk assessment protocols.

Progress since the last visit on the areas for improvement:

- Ensure that all safeguarding requirements are met – satisfactory.
- Improve the school's self-evaluation procedures in all areas of its work to help identify where improvements are required – satisfactory.
- Ensure that monitoring by subject leaders is rigorous and focuses on pupils' learning and that findings lead to actions designed to secure improvement – satisfactory.
- Ensure that the governing body holds the school to account through challenge and support and sets clear direction for its work – satisfactory.

External support

The quality and impact of the support provided by the local authority and the School Improvement Partner is good. The School Improvement Partner and the headteacher have developed a good partnership and monitor progress well.