

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

T 0300 1231231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct T 01695 566933
Direct F 01695 729320
Direct email:
ggleaden@cfbt.com



5 February 2014

Mrs Claire Harrison
Headteacher
Leftwich Community Primary School
Old Hall Road
Leftwich
Northwich
Cheshire
CW9 8DH

Dear Mrs Harrison

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Leftwich Community Primary School, Cheshire West and Chester

Following my visit to your school on 4 February 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on the findings of my visit. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in December 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- review the transition process from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 and monitor how pupils' progress is secured and developed
- embed the improved procedures and rigorous monitoring you have introduced in mathematics and develop these across all subject areas.

Evidence

During the visit, I met with you, other senior leaders, the Chair and Vice-Chair and one other member of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school strategic development plan was evaluated. I also evaluated your monitoring programme and the maths action plan. You and I visited each of the classes in the school to meet staff and pupils and to look at changes that have been made to the learning environment. I met with six pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6 to discuss their learning experiences and to look at their books.

Context

Your Y5 teacher has recently been seconded to a neighbouring school as deputy headteacher for two terms. Her post is currently being covered by increasing the hours of a current member of staff.

Main findings

You have added the areas for improvement identified in the recent inspection to your strategic development plan, although most had already been identified by you prior to the inspection. You have evaluated the success of the actions you have taken so far; however, this evaluation has not been shared widely yet due to time constraints.

The level of scrutiny by senior leaders and external advisors has increased and you evaluate the quality of teaching through evidence from lesson observations, book scrutiny, data about pupil progress and informal observations. Subject leaders have been trained to support, check and improve the quality of teaching, especially in mathematics to accelerate pupils' progress in Key Stage 2.

Staff training has increased knowledge about mathematics teaching including the application of skills and how to challenge the most-able pupils. Improved systems are in place for monitoring pupils' progress in mathematics and the impact of any interventions so that basic skills are embedded and progress accelerated. You plan to extend this system across other subjects. New books and a 'mathematics star' of the week, in addition to the stars for writing and science, have raised the importance of mathematics with the pupils. The pupils talked enthusiastically about the Star Wall as well as the times table challenge which they prepare for in class and as part of their homework.

Staff training has developed better understanding of pupils' levels of progress and pupils' prior knowledge of topics. Teachers focus on ability rather than age-related levels and move pupils on more quickly from their starting points. You are aware of the dip in progress rates between key stages; however, you have yet to review the transition process between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Examples of practical work completed collectively by the pupils reflect increased opportunities for mathematics and literacy skills to be applied across the curriculum and pupils are keen to show these to parents at the next parents' evening.

Book scrutiny has led to very clear feedback to staff to help improve the comments they write in pupils' books. Staff have worked together to improve their comments and have clear marking criteria to increase the consistency of the quality of marking. The pupils I spoke to could explain their targets and said marking is better as they don't have to ask the teachers for as much help as the comments are clearer about how to improve the work themselves. Pupils also commented that their presentation in their new mathematics books had improved and could show the evidence compared with their previous books.

Pupils commented that their reading, and use of the library, is continually improving. They are supportive of the school and like the recent changes; they were keen to tell me about the more sociable lunchtimes and their responsibility for new animals in the classes. Spellings are highlighted in their books for them to learn and every morning pupils have activities guided by the teacher to correct and improve their work. Homework centres on reading, spelling and pupils learning tables to support their basic skills.

Some governors have changed since the recent inspection and they are better informed about the progress of groups of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics as they now have clearer progress reports. Governors have a greater understanding and ability to question and challenge the school and request interim reports about interventions and their impact. They are aware of the need for gathering information first hand and plan to have more regular visits to the school. Governors are keen to challenge and support the school and have confidence in the senior leaders' ability to lead improvements.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

You have a good working relationship with the local authority representatives and appreciate the recent external support which has provided you with practical support regarding checking pupils' prior knowledge and reporting to your governing body. The local authority mathematics advisor has worked with your team to improve the scrutiny of books and has observed lessons with your mathematics leader. You have also had support with monitoring progress data from an external consultant. You continue to network with four local schools to share training and good practice by visits to other schools.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Cheshire West and Chester.

Yours sincerely

Christina McIntosh

Her Majesty's Inspector