

CfBT Inspection Services
Suite 22

West Lancs Investment Centre T 0300 123 1231

Maple View

Skelmersdale

WN8 9TG

Text Phone: 0161 618 8524

enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct T 01695 566932

Direct F 01695 729320

Direct email: hcarnall@cfbt.com



14 February 2014

Mr Andy Jessop
Executive Headteacher
Thrybergh Primary School
Oldgate Lane Town
Thrybergh
Rotherham
South Yorkshire
S65 4JG

Dear Mr Jessop

Special measures monitoring inspection of Thrybergh Primary School

Following my visit with Keith Bardon, Additional Inspector, to your school on 12 and 13 February 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in June 2013. The full list of the areas for improvement which were identified during that inspection is set out in the annex to this letter. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time:

The school is making reasonable progress towards the removal of special measures.

The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be published 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 Rotherham.

Yours sincerely

Amraz Ali
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in June 2013.

- Improve the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 classes so that pupils' attainment rises quickly and they make at least good progress by ensuring that:
 - teachers have higher expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - all teachers set tasks that are appropriately challenging and matched closely to pupils' needs and abilities, particularly for boys
 - pupils do not spend too long listening to teachers, so that they have greater opportunities to work on their own or in groups and maintain their concentration
 - pupils understand their targets, know how they are doing in meeting them, and know how to improve their work to a higher level
 - teachers' marking of pupils' work gives pupils detailed information about what needs improving and teachers give them time to practise it again, so that they can learn from their mistakes
 - teachers insist that in all subjects, pupils produce writing to the highest standard of which they are capable and that they present their work well
 - teachers, particularly those in Key Stage 2, are given the opportunity of observing and learning from the outstanding teaching which exists in school.

- Raise the achievement of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs in Key Stage 2 by:
 - ensuring that these pupils receive the right type of support which is tailored to their individual needs
 - improving the use of assessment information to check on their progress more rigorously.

- Urgently improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, including governance, by ensuring that:
 - the headteacher and other senior leaders have an accurate view about what needs to be improved and have clearer plans as to how improvements will be achieved
 - the curriculum is more effective in capturing the interest of boys and so enables them to improve their learning
 - when the headteacher and other senior leaders check the quality of teaching, they identify more precisely the improvements needed, what needs to be done to bring these about and check more regularly that these measures are working
 - more effective measures are put in place to reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent
 - subject leaders for English and mathematics are given the opportunity to check the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects so they become more effective in evaluating the school's performance and raising achievement
 - governors receive clear and accurate information about the way teachers' performance is managed and how teachers are rewarded

PROTECT-INSPECTION



- an external review of governance is conducted to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved, so that governors develop the skills needed to hold leaders and managers effectively to account for improving the school.

Report on the second monitoring inspection on 12 and 13 February 2014

Evidence

Inspectors visited ten lessons, including observing learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They observed the work of teachers and teaching assistants working with individual pupils and groups. Daily routines were observed including start-of-day activities, break time and lunchtimes. Inspectors scrutinised documents, including the school's plans for improvement and the school's records of pupils' attainment. Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, staff, groups of pupils and two representatives from the governing body. Work in pupils' files from across the school was also scrutinised.

Context

Since the last inspection the partnership with Rawmarsh Ashwood Primary, an outstanding neighbouring school, has strengthened. Both schools share an executive headteacher and each has a head of school. The deputy headteacher at this school has been appointed as head of school and is now released from her class teaching responsibilities for three days each week. One teacher has returned from maternity leave and now teaches part-time. One teacher is shortly to begin maternity leave. One teacher is absent due to sickness. The review of governance was completed and the governing body was re-constituted with a smaller number of governors. There are advanced plans for the school to become an academy, sponsored by the partner school, Rawmarsh Ashwood Primary School, after it, too, becomes an academy in April 2014. The indicative date of conversion for this school is June 2014.

Achievement of pupils at the school

Pupils' learning and progress in lessons is improving and this is leading to improvements in pupils' overall progress and attainment. Although improving, the progress of pupils across the school, including those supported by the pupil premium funding, remains inconsistent and attainment remains low overall. Writing remains a relative weakness across the school, particularly for boys. A focus on improving the presentation of work, particularly written pieces means that across the school more work is better presented, but there continues to be pupils who have weak basic skills, such as poorly formed handwriting and spelling common words wrongly. Pupils' work shows that in some classes poor handwriting and incorrect spelling goes unchecked for too long.

The school has begun to put procedures in place to tackle underachievement, such as improved planning and marking, but these improvements are recent and they are not applied consistently enough to have impacted on attainment and progress of all pupils across the school. All teachers have been made aware of the procedures to track closely the attainment and progress of pupils. A timetable of assessments and on-going teacher assessment of pupils are used to gauge pupils' levels in reading, writing and mathematics. However, although improving, the accuracy and rigour of assessments are not secure. Consequently, the information about pupils' levels does

not always securely match pupils' recorded work. Regular pupil progress review meetings are beginning to hold teachers to account for the progress pupils are making. A recent development has been for pupils to record work on loose pieces of paper and file these. However, work is not always dated and filed efficiently and so does not always provide evidence of improvements in pupils' learning over time.

The quality of teaching

Lesson observations and pupils' work demonstrate that, although improving, teaching remains inconsistent and too much is inadequate or requires improvement. Teaching is not strong enough to ensure that all pupils are making expected or better progress. Nevertheless, a number of improvements are evident. For example, the introduction of an approach called 'teach and do' involves teachers explaining new ideas and tasks and pupils undertaking short activities. Improvements to lesson planning, clearer focus in lessons and more detailed marking have also been introduced, but the impact of these new developments remains inconsistent. The use of teaching assistants has improved, but remains variable. The teaching of basic reading, writing and mathematics skills remains an acute need, particularly where there have been staff changes or recent staff absence. Some adults do not provide pupils with an accurate model of grammatically correct spoken language. Although the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) has improved, teachers and teaching assistants do not always check on the learning of every pupil to ensure that all benefit within each lesson.

In the lessons where pupils' learning is most effective, teachers communicate their expectations of pupils' work explicitly in terms of both the expected quality and quantity of work pupils should complete. For example, in a writing lesson each group knew exactly how many paragraphs they had to complete of their diary entry describing the eruption of a volcano and knew what features they had to include. However, this is not always the case and some pupils who are working by themselves do not know explicitly how much work they have to complete. Consequently, some pupils are slow to begin their work and they do not always complete as much work as they should. Additionally, even when working with quite small groups of pupils, some adults do not always identify pupils who are struggling or correct mistakes immediately.

Improvements to the marking of pupils' work means that this is regular and conscientious. It is almost always positive and encouraging and, although some marking provides pupils with explicit guidance about how to improve a piece of work or how to improve future pieces of work, there remains some variability in the level of detail provided. For example, even where teachers have identified where corrections need to be made, pupils have not always made corrections.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

A particular success has been improving attendance rates and reducing the number of pupils who are persistently absent. Consequently, attendance rates are close to average. In an attempt to improve punctuality the school is open earlier for pupils and this means that pupils can arrive and begin to undertake morning activities

during the 15 minutes before registration closes. Pupils state that they like this and it is helping to reduce the number of pupils who arrive late.

In the lessons observed most pupils behaved well, responding quickly to the teachers' instructions and were keen to answer questions and explain what they had learned. Where this was not the case, it invariably related to the quality of teaching. For example, where tasks were not explained clearly and pupils were unsure of what to do, noise levels rose and some pupils became distracted. Pupils were keen to engage inspectors in discussions in lessons, and around the school, and to offer their help. Pupils who spoke to inspectors stated categorically that they felt safe and that bullying was rare.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

The executive headteacher, working with the heads of both schools, has begun to effectively drive improvements to the quality of teaching. Accurate evaluation of teaching means that senior leaders are aware of where most improvement is needed and underperformance is being challenged. Some teachers who need extra training have individual support plans in place, but these have yet to secure improvements in all cases. Plans for improvement are in place and some progress has been made in addressing the most important issues, particularly with the planning of lessons and designing lessons to correctly meet the range of abilities within each class. Of note is the role played by the Rawmarsh Ashwood head of school, which has effectively established good relationships with the staff and has worked alongside them to plan and deliver improved learning in lessons.

The development of middle leaders is continuing. For example the mathematics, English and assessment leaders have worked with staff from the partner school to undertake work scrutiny and have presented their findings to governors. However, much of this work is too new to have impacted positively on the quality of teaching and the progress made by pupils. Senior leaders are correctly focussing their efforts on implementing the school development plan, which is designed to address each of the issues identified as an area for development when the school was judged to require special measures. However, subject leaders have not developed plans to bring about improvements in the areas they are responsible for. Performance management is used soundly and teachers have appropriate targets set for them. However, there is scope to tailor these targets more to the specific circumstances and experience of each teacher. The single central record of staff recruitment checks was examined and found to fully meet requirements.

Although the governing body is relatively new and has only met three times since it was re-constituted, its members have a clear understanding of the school's position and where most improvement is needed. They are aware that they are at the early stages of their work, but have already demonstrated their capacity both to challenge and support the work of the school. Some governors have been proactive at identifying suitable training courses, such as induction courses for new governors or courses to develop their skills at understanding school data. However, less experienced governors still require training or support to fully understand their role in challenging and supporting the development of the school. Plans for both this school and the partner school to become academies are well developed. To this end,

there is a clear management structure in place at both schools. Governors are clear about the process, and are clear that once the conversion has taken place, there will continue to be a need to drive improvement and hold senior leaders to account.

External support

The local authority support has been appropriate and continued both to challenge and support the school's leaders. The local authority has provided useful access to an external consultant who has been effective at setting up an innovative arrangement for providing an external view of the school's progress. Consequently, a group of school and academy Principals undertook an evaluation of teaching and learning at the school, which helped senior leaders and governors to gain a clear understanding of the progress being made at addressing the key issues. The local authority supported the restructuring of the governing body and appointed governors with suitable experience. Teachers engage well with staff from the partner school and have visited this more successful school to observe stronger teaching and this has contributed to the improvements in teaching.