

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



10 July 2014

Mr Dan Thomas
Headteacher
Shavington Primary School
Southbank Avenue
Shavington
Crewe
Cheshire
CW2 5BP

Dear Mr Thomas

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Shavington Primary School, Cheshire East

Following my visit to your school on 9 July 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on the findings. 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 second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in April 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.

Evidence

During the inspection I met with you and leaders responsible for various aspects of the school's work. A meeting was also held with the Chair of Governors, three other members of the governing body and telephone conversations were held with your School Improvement Partner and an officer of the local authority. Documents provided by the school were considered and short visits were made jointly with you to four lessons across Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. I spoke informally to pupils during these lessons to discuss their work and later to members of the school council to gain their views on the school. I checked the Single Central Register and found that the recording of all details of new staff met requirements. The focus of the inspection was the progress made by the school in tackling the recommendations for improvement made at the Section 5 inspection of April 2013.

Context

The year since your appointment has been a period of considerable change at the school, including a restructuring of staffing and the governing body. There have been new appointments to the teaching staff in Reception, Year 2 and Year 6. Five teaching assistants, two unqualified teachers and one senior leader have left the school since my last visit.

Main findings

You and your senior leaders and governors share a good understanding of what the school needs to do in order to become good. This has allowed the school to improve rapidly since the time of the last inspection and of my last monitoring visit. As headteacher you are vigorous, enthusiastic and committed to the school's improvement. These qualities have enabled you to tackle successfully all the recommendations from the last inspection as well as to make other significant improvements.

The school now has a much more transparent and purposeful culture, founded entirely on the basis of high quality teaching and learning and continuous improvement. Teachers greatly appreciate the clear direction you have set and your openness to their ideas. When asked about recent changes to the school, teachers said that they felt refreshed and excited by their work. You have not shrunk from hard decisions about staffing and challenging underperformance when necessary. You have also taken strong and timely actions to return the school to a sound financial footing since your appointment.

The school's own robust tracking systems show that pupils' attainment and rates of progress have risen dramatically on almost all measures this year. You are taking effective steps to improve pupils' attainment in phonics, where you recognise that pupils have not achieved so well.

Attendance has also improved significantly, due to the widening range of strategies that you use to ensure that parents and pupils understand the importance of coming to school regularly. Behaviour around the school, including pupils' attitudes towards learning, was very positive during this inspection. Pupils were courteous, friendly and confident to share their opinions with me.

You have adopted a very determined and systematic approach to improving the school and carried the whole staff, governors and the large majority of parents with you. You have put in place, for example, very robust procedures for checking the quality of teaching and learning. Teaching seen during the inspection was consistently engaging, with a strong focus on literacy, including subject terminology, and many imaginative opportunities for pupils' to think for themselves about challenging problems. Improvements to the learning spaces in the Early Years Foundation Stage have increased the opportunities for children to learn and practise their reading, writing and mathematics both inside and outside the classroom. The school's marking policy is well established and teachers give consistently high-quality feedback to pupils on their learning.

You have streamlined both the staffing and the governing body, leading to much more efficient and responsive structures. Governors are now very knowledgeable about assessment information and now have higher expectations of pupils' achievement. They are highly involved in every aspect of the school's work. The school has participated regularly in regional and local training on school improvement.

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

The school makes good use of a range of external support. The local authority has provided effective support for the restructuring of staffing and financing and you also draw well on support from an independent School Improvement Partner for the quality assurance of the school's work.

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

Yours sincerely

Susan Wareing

Her Majesty's Inspector