

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

T 0300 123 1231

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

Direct T 01695 566850

Direct F 01695 729320

Direct email: dmccarrick@cfbt.com



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Mrs Jane White
Headteacher
Coleridge Primary
Coleridge Road
Rotherham
South Yorkshire
S65 1LW

Dear Mrs White

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Coleridge Primary, Rotherham

Following my visit to your academy on 23 June 2015, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection 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 academy since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the academy was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in February 2015. 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:

- more rigorously track the progress and attainment of different groups of pupils, including that of the most able pupils in the academy
- ensure teaching challenges the most able pupils sufficiently, so that they increasingly make more than expected progress and attain higher standards by the end of Key Stage 2
- improve the level of attendance by working more closely with families whose children are regularly absent.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with you and the executive headteacher, middle leaders, two teachers, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the Central Learning Partnership Trust to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I also met with a group of pupils. You accompanied me on a tour of some classrooms where we observed the pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning. I evaluated the academy's plans for improvement and scrutinised the single central record, minutes of governing body meetings, records of checks made on the quality of teaching and information on pupils' progress and attainment.

Context

Since the last inspection, one teacher with middle leadership responsibilities has left the academy. A middle leader has been appointed to develop the quality of teaching across the foundation subjects and a new leader for the early years has taken up post. Some teachers are now teaching different year groups. Two new governors have been appointed to the governing body.

Main findings

You and the staff were disappointed by the outcome of the last inspection, but you all accept the findings and have quickly begun taking steps to improve the academy. You consulted members of staff and governors before putting in place detailed plans for improvement. These plans include appropriate targets to allow senior leaders and governors to check whether or not the academy is on course to become a good school. All members of staff in the academy know what the key priorities are and understand their role in bringing about the necessary improvements. There is a positive culture across the academy and morale is high. Members of staff are very supportive of the actions being taken by you and the executive headteacher.

Children in the early years are making better progress than in the past and, this year, the proportion of children attaining a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year is close to the national average for 2014. This is because teachers are assessing pupils' needs much more rigorously and using this information to target teaching more effectively. Standards have also risen noticeably in reading, writing and mathematics at Key Stage 1 and are also closer to national averages. The academy's tracking data shows pupils have also made much better progress at Key Stage 2 than in the past, although not enough to fully address gaps in their knowledge and understanding. Consequently, attainment remains well below national averages. In particular, not enough of the most able pupils attain higher levels in reading or mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2.

You have a clear picture of what needs to be done to improve the quality of teaching. Firstly, you are focusing on ensuring the accuracy of teacher assessments. Leaders are making more regular checks to ensure teachers have sufficient evidence

in pupils' books to support their assessments. You are also holding meetings with teachers every half-term to check on the progress of pupils. Consequently, any pupil making slower progress is quickly identified and provided with additional support. Secondly, you have raised expectations for the quality of teaching of the foundation subjects, as this was an area of relative weakness. Teachers now plan the science, geography and history content of topics in more detail and adapt the work to meet the needs of different abilities more carefully. New schemes of work for the foundation subjects have also been purchased, which is helping to strengthen teachers' subject knowledge. More opportunities for pupils to apply their writing skills are being incorporated into lessons, and pupils told me they are now provided with helpful 'steps to success' in foundation subjects.

You now make more regular checks on pupils' books and provide good feedback to teachers that helps them to refine their practice. Any identified weaknesses are revisited to see if teachers have taken steps to address them. For example, you are checking to see if pupils are given time to respond to marking and whether they take steps to improve their work. This approach is increasingly addressing inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, marking and assessment.

You have reviewed the academy's behaviour policy and have adopted a more consistent approach to the use of rewards and sanctions. The pupils I spoke to fully understood the revised behaviour policy, but did say that some lessons continue to be disrupted by some pupils calling out and not listening to others. During my visit however, it was evident that pupils were attentive in lessons and mixed well with one another during social times. Levels of attendance are lower than last year and remain well below those seen nationally. You have recognised more needs to be done to work with families with children that are regularly absent, and the attendance officer has been given more dedicated time to focus on improving attendance from September onwards.

Recent new appointments have strengthened the governing body. The governors are highly committed and determined to improve the academy. They are actively involved and meet with members of staff regularly. The governors have appropriate systems in place to check the academy is on course to become a good school.

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

External support

The Central Learning Partnership Trust is providing effective support and challenge to the academy through the work of the executive headteacher. In addition, you are drawing upon the support of an external consultant who is providing rigorous and accurate feedback to support your evaluation of the academy's strengths and weaknesses.

You also have effective partnerships in place with other Trust schools. Visits to other schools have helped leaders develop better systems for holding teachers accountable for pupils' progress and partnership work has secured significant improvements in the quality of teaching and assessment in the early years. You also buy school improvement services from the local authority and value the support you have received to improve your provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language. This support has improved the initial assessments you make of these pupils so that they receive the necessary support earlier than in the past.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Rotherham and the Director of the Central Learning Partnership Trust.

Yours sincerely

Chris Smith

Her Majesty's Inspector