

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



12 December 2016

Kathryn Clayton
Executive Headteacher
Weston Coyney Junior School
Princess Drive
Weston Coyney
Stoke-on-Trent
ST3 6NG

Dear Mrs Clayton

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Weston Coyney Junior School

Following my visit to your school on 30 November 2016, 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 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 March 2016. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. At its section 5 inspection before the one that took place in March 2016, the school was also judged to require improvement.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the last section 5 inspection in order to become a good school.

The school should take further action to:

- ensure that disadvantaged pupils make rapid progress throughout the school in order to diminish the differences between their attainment and that of other pupils nationally
- embed strategies that are now in place to improve outcomes in reading, particularly for middle-ability pupils, boys and disadvantaged pupils
- ensure that staff extend the range of appropriate opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with you, the head of school, the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) and three governors, including the chair of the governing body, to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I also had a telephone discussion with a representative of the local authority.

School documents, including improvement plans and minutes of governing body meetings, were analysed. I made short visits to every classroom with the head of school and listened to a small number of pupils read.

Context

Since the last inspection, the way classes are organised in the school has been restructured. Consequently, eight temporary members of staff have left and two teachers and two teaching assistants have joined the school. All staff now have permanent contracts. The vice-chair became the chair of the governing body in March 2016.

The school remains part of the Weston Federation with Weston Heights Infant School and plans are in place for both schools to become academies within the St Bart's Academy Trust.

Main findings

School leaders and governors have taken decisive action to quickly address the areas requiring improvement that were identified at the time of the last inspection. Consequently, the quality of teaching has continued to improve and pupils in all year groups and in a range of subjects are making faster progress.

The school is a vibrant learning environment. Displays celebrate pupils' achievements and offer support and inspiration for learning. Leaders have high aspirations for staff and pupils and there is some teaching of the highest quality in the school. Leaders are supporting staff to ensure that all teaching is consistently good or better.

Strategies are now embedded to ensure that teachers have sufficiently high expectations of what pupils can achieve and set work that is accurately matched to the ability groups of pupils. Staff know the pupils well so all groups are challenged to make accelerated progress through tasks which build upon their prior learning within sets and mixed-ability groups.

The most able pupils are set tasks to deepen their knowledge and understanding and refine their skills. They begin work at the appropriate level of challenge and

they are given additional tasks to make them think carefully about their learning. In common with other pupils in the school, they are benefiting from increased opportunities to use and apply their mathematical skills in reasoning and problem-solving activities.

The curriculum has been developed so that it provides more opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical and reading skills in other subjects. For example, pupils regularly use numerical skills in science and reading and extended writing opportunities are clearly evident through the teaching of history. However, leaders acknowledge that more could be done to further develop literacy and numeracy across the curriculum.

There has been a clear focus on improving reading in the school since the last inspection. As a result of support provided by staff from Weston Heights Infant School, there is now a consistent and effective approach to the teaching of phonics and early reading. Pupils enjoy reading and the most able readers and those who find reading more challenging read a range of appropriate texts.

The school library contains many new books, which pupils read for enjoyment and to access information. Pupils told me that they like taking books home and each classroom has a variety of texts which the pupils use. Pupils currently in the school are making faster progress in reading than in the past but strategies that are now in place did not have a significant impact on outcomes in last summer's Year 6 test. Leaders are aware that they need to ensure that actions that are now in place lead to rapid progress and improved attainment, particularly for middle-ability pupils, boys and disadvantaged pupils.

Last summer's test results indicated that disadvantaged pupils did not make fast enough progress across the curriculum in order to diminish the differences between their attainment and the attainment of similar pupils and other pupils nationally. This is a priority for improvement and leaders are taking action to increase the progress made by this group of pupils in the school. However, it is too early to evaluate the impact that this is having on attainment.

As a result of strong leadership and improved teaching, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making improved progress. The school's internal assessment system indicates that they are now making similar progress to other pupils in the school and the slow progress that they made in the past in reading and mathematics is being addressed. The support and challenge that are now in place for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have improved considerably.

The school's assessment system is now embedded and the information it provides is used effectively to hold teachers to account and monitor the progress that pupils

are making. Assessment information is accurate, is checked within the school and with the infant school, and has been externally moderated. Staff use it effectively to plan to meet the needs of different pupils in their classes and leaders use it to ask teachers questions about individuals and different groups of pupils. The assessment system shows the progress made across each year group and plans are in place to develop it further to ensure that it clearly shows the progress of pupils who have high, middle and low prior attainment.

School improvement plans have clearly defined and measurable success criteria so that the impact of actions can be monitored accurately. The current school improvement plan includes clear and specific actions to address all the areas for improvement from the previous Ofsted report within an appropriate time frame. Priorities are logically sequenced and urgency is balanced with sensible timings. The people responsible for leading and monitoring actions are identified but how actions are evaluated is less precise. This is an area that school leaders are aware that they need to address.

Governors have the skills, knowledge and experience to offer appropriate support and challenge to school leaders. They visit the school regularly, hold purposeful meetings and ask challenging questions. They have a very clear understanding of the strengths of the school and what it now needs to do to improve further.

This is an improving school that is well led and managed. Leaders have a thorough understanding of the strengths and areas for development within the school and they have taken informed actions to make improvement.

External support

The school has received high-quality support from within the Weston School Federation and the Britannia Teaching School Alliance. Both have provided useful training opportunities for staff at all levels and moderation of pupils' work has taken place with both groups. The infant school in the federation has given additional leadership support, has helped to improve the teaching of reading and phonics, and has helped to transform the provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Regular meetings take place between the staff from both schools and joint policies are now in place. The Britannia Teaching School Alliance has also supported the induction of newly qualified teachers, facilitated a SENCo network and provided opportunities for staff to visit other schools.

The local authority has also provided useful support to the school. Linked officers give appropriate support and challenge through moderation, training and regular visits. They have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools

commissioner and the director of children, adult and family services for Stoke-on-Trent. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Simon Mosley
Her Majesty's Inspector