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Serco Inspections
Boundary House
2 Wythall Green Way
Middle Lane
BIRMINGHAM
West Midlands
B47 6LW

OFSTED

T 0300 123 1231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

SERCO

Direct T 0121 683 2888



1 December 2010

Mr R Stone
Headteacher
Fosse Primary School
Balfour Street
Leicester
LE3 5EA

Dear Mr Stone

Notice to improve: monitoring inspection of Fosse Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 30 November 2010, and for the information which you provided during the inspection. Please thank your chair and fellow member of the interim executive board, the staff and the pupils who contributed to the inspection.

As a result of the inspection on 26 May 2010, the school was asked to address the most important areas for improvement which are set out in the annex to this letter.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making satisfactory progress overall in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the pupils' achievement.

A sustained trend of improving standards is evident at the end of Key Stage 2 with some good performance, especially in mathematics, in the 2010 national tests. Analysis of pupils' books across the school confirms that most pupils are making good progress in their writing because of better teaching that is targeted carefully at their needs. For instance, boys in Years 5 and 6 respond especially well to challenging work in literacy lessons because they are effectively grouped according to their ability in sets and teachers are inspiring a love of literature linked to famous authors such as Charles Dickens. Pupils' attitudes towards learning overall are positive and many write neatly in their books, taking a pride in their work. Teachers mark the pupils' work with diligence, providing praise and useful guidance to them on what to do next to improve. Pupils value this support and with encouragement some even enter into a written conversation with their teacher about their attempts to improve. This is not consistent practice in all classes and there are sometimes missed opportunities to help pupils move on in their learning. However, all pupils make good reference to their target cards and this effectively supports the better progress that they are now making.

Regular monitoring of lessons by senior staff is generating greater consistency in teaching across the school. This is confirmed by much of the teaching and learning observed during the visit being judged as good or better, and none that was inadequate. In the lessons observed for pupils in Years 5 and 6, teachers demonstrated secure subject knowledge and an ability to inspire pupils. Pupils in these classes say that lessons are more exciting and contain activities that are fun to do. All teachers gather assessment information about the pupils in their class and use it to monitor the progress individuals are making, and to plan tasks in lessons that match the needs of all pupils. Teaching assistants are used well to provide effective support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those who exhibit challenging behaviour. However, these improvements are yet to be fully realised in higher standards for pupils, and some inconsistencies still remain in the way teachers use resources such as digital visualisers and learning strategies to support good achievement.

Pupils are making good progress in their cultural development. A comprehensive plan for the promotion of community cohesion, based on a detailed audit of local diversity and need, has been successfully implemented by senior leaders. This includes an increasing range of planned experiences such the celebration of 'Black History' month, international days and performance at a multi-faith music festival in the city. Better links now exist with other local groups and contacts with schools further afield are being followed up. Residential trips to places such as London provide further levels of enrichment and are increasing the pupils' understanding about their own cultural heritage within the context of a diverse society.

Senior leaders, with the support of an effective interim executive board, have worked hard to drive forward improvement. With some good support from the local authority the key issues from the last inspection have been tackled with determination. Performance management now plays a greater role in school improvement and the raising of standards. Consequently, the school is now in a better position to use the skills and expertise of those with middle management responsibility to make further improvements for the benefit of all pupils.

I hope that you have found the inspection helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Philip Mann
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in May 2010

- Improve the quality of teaching throughout the school so that it is at least satisfactory and the majority of it is good or better by July 2011 by:
 - making effective use of assessment to plan consistently challenging work for all groups of pupils
 - ensuring that teaching strategies and resources maximise learning opportunities for each pupil in every lesson
 - assessing pupils' work within lessons in order to adapt teaching to the pupils' needs as the lesson progresses
 - providing clear guidance to all pupils so that they know how to improve their work.
- Develop and implement an effective strategy to improve pupils' cultural understanding and promote cultural diversity by:
 - preparing and implementing an action plan to enable pupils to engage more frequently with a range of communities beyond the school and the immediate locality
 - evaluating the impact of the school's work to promote cultural diversity and community cohesion on a regular basis.