

Serco Inspections
Cedar House
21 William Street
Edgbaston
Birmingham
B15 1LH

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

Serco E tim.ogbourn@serco.com
Direct T 0121 683 3888



11 March 2011

Mr Atkinson
Hollinswood Junior School
Dale Acre Way
Hollinswood
Telford
TF3 2EP

Dear Mr Atkinson

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Hollinswood Junior School

Please pass on my thanks to the deputy headteacher who was in charge when I inspected your school on 10 March 2011, and for the time given to the phone discussions, pre-inspection planning meeting and the information provided before and during the inspection. My thanks also go to the pupils and teachers observed during lessons, as well as the assistant headteacher and staff spoken to during the visit. I would also like to thank the local authority's school improvement partner and both the Chair and vice-chair of the Governing Body who, at short notice, made themselves available to meet me during the inspection. The central record of suitability checks on staff was scrutinised and it meets the current government requirements.

At the time of the inspection the headteacher was away attending a professional development visit abroad with other headteachers as part of an international curriculum initiative. There have been no significant staff changes since the school's last inspection.

As a result of the inspection on 14 December 2009, 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 has made satisfactory progress in making improvements and satisfactory progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Although pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 is below average, it is improving steadily in all year groups and is edging closer towards reaching national expectations in English, mathematics and other subjects. Teachers are tracking pupils' attainment and progress more rigorously and accurately, which has helped to

September 2010



improve teachers' lesson planning. Well-planned staff training has improved teachers' knowledge of assessment and, together with more robust monitoring by the school's leadership team, the quality of teaching is improving. There is enough good teaching to ensure that best practice is shared and developed in all classes. However, there are inconsistencies in the pace of learning in lessons and pupils' achievement across the school. While the proportion of good teaching and learning is increasing, some lessons do not expect enough of the pupils. The most effective teaching provides tasks that are well matched to the needs and abilities of all pupils. Although teachers have improved their planning, some tasks provided for pupils do not always challenge or extend learning towards higher levels.

Teachers mark pupils' work more consistently and effectively now compared with that found at the time of the school's last inspection. Learning targets are provided for pupils in English and mathematics and these are pasted into their work books so that it is clear to the pupils what is expected and the steps needed to reach higher levels of attainment. Pupils are engaged and motivated in lessons as teachers are increasingly linking different subjects and topics to plan more stimulating projects for pupils to study that hold their interest. This has improved pupils' confidence when writing about a range of topics. A recent project called 'Explorers' enabled pupils to research the history of a nineteenth century local mining pit and investigate newspaper reports of events at that time. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 produced high quality written accounts, including empathetic writing where they imagined being characters experiencing the challenges of living through a mining accident or significant event. Similarly, work books across the school show improvements to the form and structure of pupils' writing, although some lessons miss opportunities for pupils to edit or re-draft their work to improve spelling and the structure of sentences. In mathematics, there are increasing opportunities for pupils to investigate and solve challenging problems, although some lessons do not provide enough time for them to extend their knowledge of numbers or use mathematical vocabulary accurately.

The school has maintained a supportive climate for learning that is reflected in the warm relationships that exist between pupils and staff. Most lessons engage pupils for sustained periods of time because of the subject matter or innovative use of resources, such as computers or interactive whiteboards. However, the pace of learning in some lessons slows when teachers talk too much or expect pupils to listen during class discussions for too long, leaving less time for more extended learning when working independently or in groups. Targets are identified for different groups of pupils depending on their level of attainment, but teachers are not always adapting these to meet pupils' specific needs through, for example, individualised learning targets.

The local authority's advisory team and School Improvement Partner have provided good support. Systematic reviews using the raising attainment plan has steered the school towards improving pupils' learning and progress. Coordinated staff training, particularly in the use of assessment to check how much progress pupils make, has



helped to increase the school's capacity for sustained improvement. Consequently, the leadership team and all teachers are taking on more effective responsibility for evaluating each other's performance towards raising pupils' attainment.

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

Charalambos Loizou
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in December 2009.

- Raise attainment across all subjects during the next two years by:
 - developing teaching strategies that will consistently improve pupils' learning and progress
 - ensuring that all teachers make full use of assessment data when planning work for individuals and groups of pupils
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to enhance their basic skills across the foundation subjects
 - developing the curriculum so that pupils find all their work stimulating.

- Develop the expertise of teachers by ensuring that:
 - they receive further support and development in the analysis of assessment information
 - they are more closely involved in monitoring and evaluating the impact of initiatives in order to drive improvement.