

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
Direct T 0121 683 3888



6 May 2011

Mr Leverett
Stukeley Meadows Primary School
Wertheim Way
Huntingdon
PE29 6UH

Dear Mr Leverett

Notice to improve: monitoring inspection of Stukeley Meadows Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 5 May 2011 and for the information which you provided during the inspection. I should be grateful if you would also give my thanks to the pupils and staff with whom I spoke and to the members of the governing body I met and the representative from the local authority.

As a result of the inspection on 4 November 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 in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising pupils' achievement.

Pupils' progress in mathematics is improving. In the large majority of classes, the school is narrowing the gap between pupils' attainment in mathematics and that of pupils of similar abilities in other schools. Progress is most rapid in Year 6 and slowest in Year 3. In English, too, attainment is rising. The school's leaders have increased the amount of time spent on the teaching of mathematics. It is now, on average, more than one hour a day. In addition, part of registration time is devoted to improving pupils' mental mathematics. In lessons, the main focus is on number work; the coverage of other aspects of the subject such as data handling, shape and measuring is satisfactory. Teachers' knowledge of the subject has improved.

The quality of teaching is improving and more is now consistently good. There is more frequent monitoring of its quality and there is a good range of strategies to bring about improvement. This includes joint planning, joint teaching, observing model lessons and feedback on the teachers' own teaching. The pace of

mathematics lessons is generally at least satisfactory. Teachers' use assessment information more effectively and ensure that there are different expectations of pupils of differing ability. Lessons are well -planned and expectations are generally appropriate, though in some lessons there are parts where there is insufficient challenge. The school's leaders have commissioned research into pupils' strengths and weaknesses in mathematics. This has led to teaching that is better focused. For example, there is work to help pupils to tackle multi-stage problems as well as those problems that are expressed in everyday contexts, and which use words rather than symbols. In addition, there is teaching to improve pupils' knowledge of mathematical terminology, though this is inconsistent. In one mixed Year 3 and Year 4 class, the pupils were confident in their use of the terms 'numerator' and 'denominator' when talking about fractions. However, pupils are sometimes unaware of the different mathematical synonyms. In another class, the teacher used the term 'times' exclusively; the term 'multiply' was not used at all. Although the school's data show that pupils' proficiency in mental mathematics is improving, some are held back by uncertainties about their multiplication tables and, therefore, about division. In addition, many pupils are not sufficiently aware of the different techniques that can be used to work out the answer to multiplications involving two single digits. Pupils are taught different approaches to multiplying numbers with two or more digits. However, some do not move easily from one method to another if they are having problems. Year 6 pupils understand well how to check their answers by, for example, carrying out inverse operations and some were observed doing so. Teachers' questions are generally well-focused, and the use by pupils of mini-white boards helps the teacher to assess progress and give help when it is needed. However, not all errors are identified. This also occurs on occasions when pupils work in books because there is insufficient monitoring of their work.

The frequency with which pupils' knowledge and understanding is formally assessed has been increased and now takes place half termly. Assessments are used to identify underachievement and to pinpoint what can be done to remedy weaknesses. The rapidity and frequency of the process allows regular evaluations of its success in improving learning. As a result, the process has improved since it was established. Initially, some areas for improvement were too vague, but are they are becoming more detailed and precise. Pupils are now much more aware of the progress they are making and what they need to do to improve. They are developing as independent learners as a result of the school's work.

The governing body is strongly focused on supporting and challenging the school's leaders to bring about improvement. Members of the governing body know the school well and have a much better understanding of the progress that pupils are making. The local authority (LA) has provided a good range of support. Its statement of action is fit for purpose. The LA has also, for example, provided assistance to the school's leaders in drawing up the improvement plan, supporting the improvement in teaching quality and the accuracy of leaders' monitoring of it. It has organised a day in which the school's progress was evaluated, which leaders found useful. The impact of its work is satisfactory.

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

Alan Alder
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- By the summer term 2011, raise attainment in mathematics in Years 3 to 6 by:
 - providing time to teach the subject in sufficient depth
 - giving more emphasis to the teaching of mental mathematics
 - providing training to improve teachers' mathematical knowledge
 - ensuring all teachers are fully accountable for the rate of pupils' progress.

- By the start of the autumn term 2011, increase the proportion of consistently good teaching throughout the school by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can attain
 - ensuring lessons always have a good pace
 - checking learning activities challenge pupils to give of their best
 - improving the quality of marking and feedback to pupils so that they are clear on what they need to do to improve their learning
 - ensuring pupils use their targets for learning more often in lessons.

- By the start of the spring term 2011, improve the rigour with which academic outcomes are monitored so that potential downturns are immediately addressed, progress quickened and the right support is provided to any pupil who is falling behind in their learning.