

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

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

Serco
Direct T 0121 683 3888



27 January 2012

Mrs Victoria Giliker
Headteacher
Fairfield Endowed C of E Junior School
Boarstone Lane
Buxton
SK17 7NA

Dear Mrs Giliker

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Fairfield Endowed C of E (C) Junior School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 26 January, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. Please pass on my thanks to the staff and representatives of the governing body with whom I spoke, for their time and courtesy. I would like particularly to thank the pupils for the enjoyable time I spent talking with them.

Since the previous inspection there have been no significant contextual changes.

As a result of the inspection on 24 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 has made good progress in making improvements.

Achievement of pupils at the school

The unvalidated results of national tests for pupils in Year 6 in 2011 indicate that overall attainment is above the national average. This represents an improvement from 2010 and significant improvement from 2009, when attainment was significantly below the national average. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 is above the national average in both English and mathematics. The proportion of girls reaching Level 5 in both English and mathematics is significantly above the national average. School tracking data shows that the majority of pupils are making good progress in lessons and over time. These developments are the result of improving provision and raised expectations.



The quality of teaching

There is a strong focus in lessons on the individual needs of pupils. Planning is detailed and takes careful account of prior learning. Teachers make effective use of assessment information and as a result, there is a good match of challenging work to pupils' skills. Questioning is used effectively to identify and address misconceptions, as well as to extend pupils' thinking through the use of more probing questions. The school has a sharp focus on progression in skills. It has undertaken a full review of the curriculum to ensure that pupils have good opportunities to apply their literacy and numeracy skills across all subject areas. Pupils talked enthusiastically about using their numeracy skills to calculate the distance between the earth and the moon and their literacy skills to devise time-lines, in a range of topic-based work. Additionally, teachers make effective use of homework to reinforce key skills at home and promote family learning.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' excellent behaviour makes a significant contribution to the effectiveness of learning. They understand the school's routines well and expectations are high. They say that they feel safe at school, enjoy good friendships and that there is no intimidating or poor behaviour.

The quality of leadership and management of the school

The strong leadership team sets high expectations of all staff and gives a clear vision which is understood and shared. Sharply focused action plans and challenging targets have raised attainment, boosted progress and increased the proportion of good teaching. The governing body is fully involved in evaluating the impact of the school's work through a wide range of activities. These include learning walks, attendance at review meetings with senior leaders and the local authority, meeting with subject leaders and scrutiny of pupils' books. New named governor roles have been introduced to ensure greater accountability on key issues. Governors are also actively involved in many other aspects of school life such as curriculum days, celebration assemblies and pupil concerts. As a result, they have a secure understanding and knowledge of the school, including its performance, and are providing support and challenge in equal measure.

The school appreciates the good support provided by the local authority.

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

Dorothy Bathgate
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

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

- Raise pupils' attainment, and quicken and ensure consistency in the rate at which individuals and groups make progress by:
 - ensuring that, in all lessons and interventions, teachers regularly check pupils' understanding, address misconceptions, and modify plans to closely match the needs of individuals and groups
 - ensuring that all teachers are equally able to modify curriculum plans to best meet the needs of all pupils equally well
 - offer more opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills to a high standard across the curriculum.

- Strengthen the engagement of the governing body in setting the strategic direction of the school by:
 - embedding a rigorous programme of monitoring and evaluation activities
 - ensuring governors use the information they gather to hold school leaders to account for the impact of improvement plans.