

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



8 February 2012

Mrs Val Matthews
Headteacher
Ludlow Infant School
Sandpits Road
Ludlow
SY8 1HG

Dear Mrs Matthews

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Ludlow Infant School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 7 February 2012 and for the information which you provided during the inspection. Please pass on my thanks to staff, members of the governing body, pupils, parents and carers who met with me during my visit.

Since the previous inspection, there have been several changes of staff including within the leadership team. An acting deputy headteacher was appointed in September 2011. The governing body is presently investigating, with three other local schools, the possibility of forming a local federation.

As a result of the inspection on 22 June 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

Pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics have shown good improvement since the previous inspection and show every sign of continuing this trend. Results in 2011 at the end of Year 2 indicated attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was significantly above the national average. Nearly all groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and more-able pupils, make similarly good or better progress. The school has identified through its data that, although the progress of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is satisfactory, it could be improved, and is taking action to bring this about. Attainment in reading is especially high, with almost half the pupils in 2011 reaching levels above the national average. Improvement has come about because

January 2012



teachers' lesson planning makes very effective use of extensive assessment data in order to provide for the learning needs of every pupil. School data confirms that, as a result of intensive support strategies each morning through the school's 'circuit' groups, pupils make continuous improvement and quick progress. Challenging targets are being met in every year group, ensuring that almost all pupils are achieving well.

The quality of teaching

Although there have been a number of staff changes recently, the school has succeeded in significantly increasing the proportion of good teaching in the school. During the inspection, the teaching observed was consistently good. Lessons are characterised by teachers making absolutely clear what pupils are to learn, high expectations and interesting and exciting learning activities. This was seen when all three Year 2 classes toured the school grounds at different times to look for the 'colours of winter', and then used their discoveries in creative writing. Very effective deployment of competent teaching assistants helps every pupil to have regular adult support and guidance, although pupils are encouraged to develop independent skills. Pupils have a good and detailed knowledge of their learning targets, especially their regularly updated 'pencil' targets, and are always eager to improve. Teachers' marking has improved and is consistent in all classes. However, pupils cannot always read or understand written comments and require further explanation.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The school is a lively and active community with a strong learning ethos. Pupils are happy, confident with each other and adults, and cooperate well with everyone in and out of school. They understand how to keep safe and have few concerns about any form of bullying, which they say is dealt with quickly and fairly by adults. Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning and are developing good social and moral skills.

The quality of leadership and management of the school

The headteacher has led the development of improving teaching, learning and achievement strongly since the previous inspection. She has ensured that staff have a very clear understanding of what is expected of them in respect of the progress and well-being of pupils. The headteacher has personally taken much of the responsibility for improving assessment and tracking of pupils' progress, making planning more consistent and setting high expectations for teachers' professional development. Latterly, she has received effective support from the acting deputy headteacher, particularly in monitoring teaching and modelling good teaching practice. These contributions have led to much improved achievement and progress of pupils, and better teaching. The contribution of the governing body, under the astute leadership of the Chair, has also improved and dealt with past weaknesses, for example, in its provision for community cohesion. Consequently, the school has established good ongoing links with other communities, especially a contrasting

school in Tipton. The governing body also now ensures that all school policies and procedures, especially relating to health and safety and safeguarding, are regularly reviewed and monitored. The governing body is wholly involved in strategic planning through the school development plan, which includes measurable time targets and budget costings. The school has been well supported by local authority advisers and, in particular, its School Improvement Partner. The good track record of school leaders since the last inspection in the improvement of the teaching, learning and the progress of pupils, demonstrates the school's capacity to carry out further improvement.

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

Rodney Braithwaite
Additional inspector

Annex

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

- Secure better learning and progress for pupils and increase the proportion of good teaching across the school by:
 - ensuring teachers make very clear to pupils what they are going to learn and how their success will be measured
 - ensuring that lesson planning makes effective use of assessment information to enable teachers to plan lessons that provide work at the right level for children of all abilities
 - ensuring that, when they mark pupils' work, teachers must explain what pupils must do to reach the next level in their learning.

- Leaders and managers should improve the effectiveness of the school's work by:
 - setting a clear direction for the school that focuses on improvements to achievement and the quality of teaching by strengthening the role of all leaders and holding all staff accountable for their work
 - setting clear expectations and guidance for what the school wants to see in lessons and establishing robust systems to ensure that all staff adhere to them
 - refining the tracking of pupils' progress to determine the rates of progress made by different groups, particularly higher attaining pupils and those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities
 - add specific quantifiable and timed targets in all strategic plans so that progress towards them is measurable and can be reported accurately
 - ensuring that the school meets its statutory duty to promote community cohesion
 - secure rapid and sustained improvements in the school's systems for promoting pupils' health, safety and well-being by ensuring the governing body monitors policies, systems and procedures regularly and with rigour.