

Serco Inspections  
20 Colmore Circus Queensway  
Birmingham  
B4 6AT

T 0300 123 1231  
Text Phone: 0161 6188524  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



30 April 2013

Cindy Impey  
Headteacher  
Sandridge School  
Woodcock Hill  
Sandridge  
St Albans  
AL4 9EB

Dear Mrs Impey

**Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Sandridge School, Hertfordshire local authority.**

Following my visit to your school on 29 April 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on the findings. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school. This was the first visit since the most recent section 5 inspection on 5 March 2013 when it was judged to require improvement.

**Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you and other senior leaders, governors and a representative of the local authority (LA). The school's raising achievement plan (RAP) was evaluated. You took me on a brief tour of the school to show me where changes are making a difference to pupils' learning.

**Context**

Since the last inspection the deputy headteacher has left. A new deputy and two other teachers have been appointed to start in September. Building works to accommodate growth in pupil numbers should be completed by the end of May.

**Main findings**

In all discussions, the emphasis on improving teaching and raising achievement came through strongly. You are steering the school through a period of change,

selecting and positioning staff in key roles to spread the workload. The RAP is a suitable tool to move the school to good although some of the actions should be more explicit and measurable. It would benefit from extension so that staff can see the final goal and the continuum of improvement towards it. The needs and induction of new staff should be included so that there is no slippage in implementing the plan.

Staff have received training in the teaching of phonics (links between letters and sounds) to raise standards in reading. Leaders are using data effectively to see where pupils need extra help. As a consequence, pupils are making better progress and catching up. Leaders of English and mathematics are developing their leadership skills. They could do more to help staff to recognise opportunities for pupils to apply their basic skills in other subjects.

Governors know how to analyse and interpret achievement data. They are keen to get the best out of school visits to gather first-hand information. They support and they challenge. Governors are familiar systems to manage staff's performance. They ensure pupil premium funding makes a difference in pupils' achievement.

Senior leaders and governors have begun to take effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. Following the visit to the school, HMI recommends that further action is taken to:

- extend the RAP from three to five terms
- sharpen the actions in the RAP so that they can be measured easily
- use subject leaders' expertise to identify where pupils could apply and practise their literacy and numeracy skills across the full range of subjects
- make use of Ofsted's reports and publications as examples of the best practice, especially: *Mathematics: made to measure* and *Getting to good*.

Ofsted will continue to monitor the school until its next section 5 inspection.

### **External support**

The LA has responded quickly to provide a range of support. It has helped the school to set its objectives in order of priority. Checks for progress are regular, including a full review planned later this term. It put you in touch with a high-performing school to enhance opportunities for you to tap into the best practice. It supported the recruitment process for the appointment of the new deputy. Governors have received a range of training. Financial assistance has been forthcoming to respond to the school's expansion.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Education for Hertfordshire.

Yours sincerely

Linda Killman

**Her Majesty's Inspector**