

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

Direct T 01216 799163
Direct email: lewis.mackie@serco.com



26 April 2013

Richard Epps
Lansdowne Primary Academy
Lansdowne Road
Tilbury
Essex
RM18 7QB

Dear Mr Epps

Monitoring inspection visit under Section 8 of the Education Act 2005 to Lansdowne Primary Academy, Thurrock.

Following my visit to your academy on 25 April 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on the findings of my visit. 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 academy since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the academy was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in January 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During the visit, I met with you and your senior leaders. The assistant headteacher toured classrooms with me. I met with members of the board of directors and members of the governing body. Two consultants who provide improvement services also met with me. I reviewed documents including academy improvement plans.

Context

Since the previous inspection, the academy has appointed one full-time and two part-time teachers. One long-term supply teacher is covering the class of a teacher on maternity leave. The Chair of the Governing Body has resigned his post and the vice-chair is acting as chair.

Main findings

Leaders have appropriate systems in place to improve the quality of teaching. Where teaching requires improvement leaders implement individual development plans. Teachers receive training and benefit from regular coaching from an academy leader or an external provider. Whole staff training has been provided to improve the teaching of phonics. Leaders have introduced a new approach to teaching reading, and writing across the academy. Leaders have also introduced short additional daily mathematics sessions to improve pupils' basic knowledge, for example of times tables. Some pupils also attend catch-up sessions to improve their literacy and numeracy skills at the linked secondary academy.

Leaders monitor the quality of teaching by visiting classrooms, tracking the progress of pupils and looking at the work in their books. Leaders are not yet routinely considering the results of this monitoring together to give an accurate picture of teaching over time. Teachers receive targets to improve their practice but these are not routinely followed through to subsequent observations to ensure that matters improve quickly.

Academy improvement plans address all of the areas for improvement from the January 2013 inspection and leaders have set very helpful milestone targets, which set the expectations for each term. These do not include targets for the attainment and progress of pupils in each year group however. This makes it difficult for governors and the board of directors to monitor progress rigorously.

Members of the governing body know the academy well and visit regularly. They keep track of the academy's actions and talk with parents and pupils to assess the impact of these actions. A member of the governing body visits the academy regularly to review progress and attainment data with an academy leader. The board of directors has responsibility for standards and progress. It has set targets for the attainment, the quality of teaching and attendance across all four academies in the learning community. However, the roles of the board of directors and the governing body have not been defined well enough. The trust has not set out clearly enough how the academy is monitored and challenged.

Senior leaders, the board of directors and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. Following the visit to the academy, I recommend that further action is taken to

- clarify and strengthen the roles of the local governing body and the board of directors in monitoring and challenging the work of the academy
- ensure development plans include challenging targets for the progress and attainment of pupils from Year 1 to Year 6

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

External support

The academy purchases support from a neighboring local authority to improve the teaching of literacy and leadership. This has included a recent review of progress in addressing the areas for improvement. An external consultant is working with teachers to improve standards in mathematics. The academy also draws on support and training from its linked academies in the learning community, for instance to assure the accuracy of teachers' assessments.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Board of Directors of The Gateway Learning Community, the Director of the Ormiston Trust and as below.

Yours sincerely

Michelle Winter

Her Majesty's Inspector