

PROTECT-INSPECTION

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: 0121 6799168
Direct email: beverley.joyner@serco.com



20 June 2013

Ms Diane Sloan
Acting headteacher
Rowsley CofE (VA) Primary School
Woodhouse Road
Rowsley
Matlock
DE4 2ED

Dear Ms Sloan

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit to Rowsley CofE (VA) Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 19 June 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 school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

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

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, two representatives of the governing body and a local authority officer to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. We jointly conducted a walk around school. I evaluated your school improvement plan.

Context

Since the inspection, the headteacher has resigned. You are currently undertaking an acting headteacher role.

Main findings

Despite uncertainties about school leadership, you have quickly taken action to tackle the weaknesses in teaching and pupils' learning that were identified at the time of the inspection. You have updated the school improvement plan. This sets out

clearly what needs to happen and how aspects will be monitored. It includes challenging, but realistic, quantifiable targets against which progress can be measured.

You have taken effective steps to improve marking. Recent checks by yourself and governors show that it is better than at the time of the inspection. Pupils reported to governors that they are enjoying, and benefiting from, the daily 'fix it' time when they can respond to marking, as well as the increasing opportunities they have to mark each other's work. Your checks also show that further action is needed, such as to improve the quality of marking in mathematics, and you have identified the next steps for all staff. This demonstrates that you are providing effective leadership and understand how to lead school improvement. You are now addressing with urgency the other aspects of teaching that were identified for improvement at the time of the inspection.

You are tracking pupils' progress accurately and have a clear picture of how well individuals and groups of pupils are doing. There are early signs that pupils are making better progress, particularly higher-attaining pupils.

Governors have acted decisively to secure leadership in the medium term, with clear plans in place for the longer term. They are aware that any future changes in leadership must sustain and embed the successful initiatives you have put in place.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- ensure that teachers point out clearly the reasons why pupils made errors when marking mathematics work.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

The local authority is providing good support. The senior link adviser has an in-depth knowledge of the school and this has been critical in securing improvements. A clear and focused plan of support is in place to improve the quality of teaching and learning and to secure the future leadership of the school.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Derbyshire.

Yours sincerely

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Dorothy Bathgate
Her Majesty's Inspector