

Serco Inspections
Colmore Plaza
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 679 9161
Direct email: ann.morris@serco.com



11 July 2013

Mr David Lister
The Friary School
Eastern Avenue
Lichfield
WS13 7EW

Dear Mr Lister

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to The Friary School

Following my visit to your school on 10 July 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report 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, I held meetings with you, other senior leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and Chair of the Curriculum and Standards Committee, and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I evaluated the school action plan. I met with teachers, visited several classrooms to observe teaching and sample pupils' work, and observed pupils at break time. I reviewed the report of the independent 'core group' monitoring visit, and scrutinised minutes from governing body meetings.

Main findings

School leaders have quickly acted to tackle the areas for improvement, successfully engaging staff in an extensive programme of teacher training and development. Teachers have welcomed this wholeheartedly, and are enjoying the sense of common purpose led by you, your senior team and the governing body. The first action established a network of pairs of teachers, meeting with the guidance of a

manager. This is allowing teachers to work with colleagues from other subjects, collaboratively planning and trying out ways of setting work at the right level for all pupils. Crucially, there is formal time for teachers to discuss the impact of their teaching on pupils' learning. The same approach is also helping to develop marking and feedback to pupils. Teachers have made a good start in improving these aspects. The work is not yet finished, however. A second, equally effective action has been to revise and re-launch the school behaviour code. Teachers are positive about its impact on managing low level disruption.

Governors have seized the opportunity provided by the inspection to put into action plans they had already identified as being necessary. The good school action plan contains clear performance milestones linked to teaching quality and pupil learning. Senior staff have reviewed the curriculum and given it a more academic focus.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection.

Ofsted may carry out a further visit after the December 2013 core group visit, when the impact of improvements to teaching, learning and pupil behaviour should be secure. Where necessary, Ofsted will provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

The school has made a link with Walton High School and its local leader in education that is providing effective support and advice. This, together with local authority school improvement officer support, has brought an independent view to the school's own self-evaluation that has helped confirm the priorities for improvement. The core group report shows an accurate understanding of the current performance of the school and includes clear judgements.

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

Yours sincerely

Brian Cartwright
Her Majesty's Inspector