

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

Direct T 012 679 9165  
Direct email: victoria.mortimore2@serco.com



10 September 2013

Brian Bird  
Weston-under-Penyard CofE Primary School  
School Lane  
Weston-under-Penyard  
Ross-on-Wye  
HR9 7PA

Dear Mr Bird

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Weston-under-Penyard CofE Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 9 September 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 May 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

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

- sharpen the criteria used to measure the success of planned improvement actions, as a means of strengthening the accountability of leaders, managers and staff for their performance
- establish mechanisms for leaders, governors and external advisers to evaluate school improvement and review performance at key milestones in the future
- ensure that new arrangements for teaching Reception-age children with pupils in Years 1 and 2 provides a good quality of education across the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1.

## **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you, the numeracy coordinator, pupils, representatives of the governing body, and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school's improvement plans were evaluated. I visited lessons briefly with you on a tour of the school. Documentation was scrutinised, including records of the outcomes of monitoring activities and of the work of the governing body.

## **Context**

Since the last inspection, the school has undergone a reorganisation in response to a fall in the number of pupils on roll. The deputy headteacher has retired. One new teacher has been appointed to replace two staff who have left. Two teaching assistants have been appointed to become higher level teaching assistants. Classes have been reorganised, merging Reception with Years 1 and 2. A new Chair of Governors has been elected.

## **Main findings**

Prior to the last inspection, school leaders and governors identified weaknesses in performance and set in place effective improvement actions. For example, the numeracy coordinator analysed assessments carefully, overhauled the mathematics curriculum and supported the development of teaching of mathematics across the school. Early indications suggest some marked improvements for pupils as a result of such actions. Unvalidated national test and assessment results for Year 6 pupils in 2013 showed a marked rise in writing and mathematics scores and sustained strength in reading. Most pupils across the attainment range made at least the progress expected of them and many exceeded this. Pupils scored highly in the phonics reading test in Year 1, and most in Year 2 made progress at least in line with expectations.

You have worked closely with the new Chair of Governors to shape the school's actions in response to the key findings of the section 5 inspection. In particular, you have made arrangements for considerable strengthening of external monitoring of teaching quality during the course of the current term. While actions are explicitly planned to address issues raised at the inspection, their anticipated outcomes are not measurable enough, particularly in terms of the expected improvements in teaching and pupils' progress. As a result, the success of the drive for improvement will be difficult to sharply evaluate, and the feedback given to staff on improvements in their performance may not be as precise as possible. The plan identifies those responsible for key actions and timescales for completion, but does not specify who will evaluate the success of the plan or the intervals at which the plan will be reviewed.

Governors continue to monitor the work of the school closely. For example, they check carefully on the impact of spending of the pupil premium, which is very successful in supporting good progress for a number of individual pupils eligible for free school meals. During the course of the last year, governors devoted considerable energy to reorganising the school and its staffing. It is too early to judge the impact of the consequent merger of the Reception class with that of Years 1 and 2, but this will require careful monitoring and support in the terms ahead.

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 school relied largely on its own resources to drive improvement immediately after the inspection. However it is now drawing on a range of external agencies to set in place a comprehensive range of monitoring, advice and support for teaching in the coming term. It has employed the services of a school improvement partner, and will be supported by a monitoring team from the Diocese of Hereford. The local authority has restructured its support services and will directly support the school with aspects of teaching, as well as in facilitating links with other schools.

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

Yours sincerely

Ian Hodgkinson  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**