

Serco Inspections
20 Colmore Circus Queensway
Birmingham
B4 6AT

T 0300 123 1231
Text Phone: 0161 618 8524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct T: 0121 679 9158
Direct email: rachel.dayan@serco.com

13 September 2013

Jon Brown
Headteacher
Buckminster Primary School
School Lane
Buckminster
Grantham
NG33 5RZ

Dear Mr Brown

Special measures monitoring inspection of Buckminster Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 12 September 2013 with Philippa Darley HMI, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's recent section 5 inspection.

This visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in April 2013.

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher and two senior leaders of the school, a representative of the local authority and two members of the governing body, including the Vice-Chair. The local authority's statement of action and the school's improvement plan were evaluated.

Context

Since the inspection a new permanent, full-time headteacher has taken up post. Two permanent full-time senior leaders have been appointed, one from the existing staff and one from another school. Significant changes to teaching staff are being made and are almost complete. The number of pupils on roll has increased significantly. The school intends to become an academy and has started the process of identifying a sponsor.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

The new headteacher is leading improvement with considerable drive and enthusiasm. In partnership with the governing body, local authority and previous interim part-time headteacher, he did a considerable amount of planning in the summer term before taking up post. As a result, much has been achieved within the first three weeks of his headship. He has created a senior leadership team and arranged training for them, where required, to enable them to be effective in their roles as quickly as possible. The new team includes an experienced leader of provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, filling a significant gap identified in the previous inspection. With good support from the governing body and local authority, the headteacher has almost completely removed long-standing staffing difficulties. The morale of the staff who are now in school is high and they are committed to improving pupils' achievement without delay.

The school improvement plan is well constructed to remove the causes of concern with appropriate urgency. It includes clear targets to get the achievement of all pupils to where it should be. It has a strong focus on the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection. In particular, it correctly gives priority to ensuring staff have access to good assessment information and the skills in using it to plan lessons that meet the needs of all pupils. To underpin this, the headteacher has already introduced a practical and manageable system for assessing and recording pupils' progress.

The local authority has prepared its statement of action to support the school's improvement plan, and the two plans go well together. The local authority's plan, for example, provides well-tailored support from a local teaching schools' alliance and local leaders in education to ensure that staff have the necessary skills to tackle the priorities in their school improvement plan. A designated local authority officer is already closely monitoring the plans to ensure they are achieving their purposes without overloading school leaders and staff. The school is receiving effective support from the local authority's human resources department in dealing with staffing matters. Good arrangements are in place for school leaders, governors and local authority officers to come together on a half-termly basis to review the impact of their work and to hold each other to account.

Before the previous inspection the governors demonstrated their capacity to monitor the school's performance and take appropriate steps when improvements were needed. Since then they have contributed significantly to the appointment of strong new leaders and ensured that they can focus on the key task of improving teaching without being unduly side-tracked by personnel issues or the preparation for academy status. They have a clear understanding of the priorities in the school

improvement plan, and in their discussion with inspectors they demonstrated that they know precisely what questions to ask to assure themselves that the plan is succeeding in raising the achievement of all pupils.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose.

The school's improvement plan is fit for purpose.

The school may appoint one newly qualified teacher before the next monitoring inspection and this can be to any key stage as required.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Leicestershire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

John Rutherford
Her Majesty's Inspector