

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 9158
Direct email: rachel.dayan@serco.com



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Ms Helen Okrafo-Smart
Headteacher
Surfleet Primary School
Station Road
Surfleet
Lincolnshire
PE11 4DB

Dear Ms Okrafo-Smart

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Surfleet Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 3 December 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 October 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

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 leaders of English and mathematics have more opportunities in which to check on the quality of teaching through visits to lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work, in order to help them drive improvement in their areas of responsibility
- focus more specifically on the root causes of underachievement in writing so that pupils can make faster progress.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you and other senior leaders, the executive headteacher designate, a group of eight pupils from Key Stage 2, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority, in order to discuss the

action taken since the last inspection. The school improvement plan was evaluated. We conducted a tour of the school. I considered the school's current information on pupils' achievements. I looked at a range of pupils' work.

Context

Since the last section 5 inspection, the governing body has appointed an executive headteacher for the hard federation of Surfleet Primary School and Weston St. Mary Church of England Primary School. The executive headteacher designate will relieve you of your duties as interim executive headteacher from January 2013. A new head of school for Surfleet Primary School has been appointed to replace the senior teacher who is leaving the school at the end of the autumn term 2013.

Main findings

You have quickly improved teachers' skills in assessing more accurately the level that individual pupils are working at in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers are using these assessments in order to plan more precisely activities which provide the right amount of challenge for pupils of different abilities. Teachers are providing teaching assistants with clearer guidance on how to support pupils' learning. Pupils confirm that their work is more challenging, particularly in mathematics, and that they are being supported better by adults. Consequently, they are making progress at a faster rate in mathematics. Pupils say that they have recently been given targets and they have a better understanding of what they have to do next to reach the next level of attainment. This is having a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to learning because they are motivated to reach their personal targets.

You have introduced a new system for tracking pupils' progress and attainment. This has helped governors and senior leaders to have a sharper understanding of the current achievement of groups of pupils. The tracking reveals the gaps in attainment between pupils' reading and writing skills, which is a barrier for securing good levels of achievement in English.

The leaders of English and mathematics have been more involved in analysing the information from the new tracking system. This has helped them to identify pupils who are not making the progress they should be and put in place support at an earlier stage. Although leaders have a better understanding of pupils' achievements, they are not involved enough in visits to lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work. Consequently, they are not checking closely enough the quality of teaching. This is limiting their ability to drive improvement in their areas of responsibility.

Governors have wasted no time in making key appointments in order to secure a clear leadership structure for the federation. Staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities because they have been provided with revised job descriptions.

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 has provided effective support to the school. Teaching and learning consultants have helped to improve teachers' skills in assessing accurately the attainment of individual pupils. This information is then used to help plan activities which more closely meet the needs of pupils.

The local authority officer has provided effective support to the governing body. She has helped them to put in place a clearer leadership structure across the federation and ensure that all members of staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities.

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

Yours sincerely

David Carter
Her Majesty's Inspector