

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 679 9153
Direct email: naik.sandhu@serco.com

3 December 2013

Amanda Woolmer
Headteacher
John Bunyan Junior School
Lancaster Way
Braintree
CM7 5UL

Dear Mrs Woolmer

Special measures monitoring inspection of John Bunyan Junior School

Following my visit to your school on 2 December 2013, 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.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in September 2013.

Evidence

During this inspection, the inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body, three other governors and two representatives of the local authority. The inspector evaluated the local authority's statement of action and the school's improvement plans. The headteacher and the inspector visited classrooms together to observe teaching and learning. The inspector also looked at records of monitoring activities and records of progress for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.

Context

There have been no staff changes since the section 5 inspection.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

The local authority's statement of action details appropriate support and monitoring activities. However, the school's own action plan is too short term to provide the clear direction the school needs to address all of the areas of improvement from the section 5 inspection. It is not clear from the plan how specific weaknesses in teaching will be addressed. School leaders delayed drawing up a more complete plan for improvement while they awaited the local authority's statement of action.

The headteacher monitors the quality of teaching through lesson observations, but reports following these visits are not detailed enough to gain an accurate view of how teaching needs to improve. Teachers are now linked to colleagues in the teaching school's alliance but this work is at an early stage and has yet to impact on the quality of teaching.

Leaders have set clearer expectations of how pupils' work should be marked but the quality of marking is inconsistent. Teachers' marking does not always address the most urgent areas for improvement nor does it refer to pupils' targets which are sometimes too broad to help pupils understand what precisely they need to improve.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs have individual learning plans with appropriate next steps, but their targets do not transfer to the work they do in literacy and numeracy lessons, where they have different targets.

Governors do not have a clear view about how they will improve. A planned review of governance has been cancelled. The governors await the support detailed in the local authority's statement of action. This includes governor training and additional governors with appropriate skills and experience.

The local authority representative visits the school to monitor books, observe teaching and support leadership. The reports of the local authority representative are helpful and provide useful feedback to school leaders.

Following the monitoring inspection, the following judgements were made:

The local authority statement of action is fit for purpose

The school's improvement action plan is not fit for purpose

The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

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

Yours sincerely

Michelle Winter
Her Majesty's Inspector