

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 9153
Direct email: naik.sandhu@serco.com



9 December 2013

Derek Higgins
Belbroughton CofE Primary School
Bradford Lane
Belbroughton
DY9 9TF

Dear Mr Higgins

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Belbroughton CofE Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 6 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:

- enable pupils to make improvements to their own writing as a result of the teachers' comments
- ensure that the proformas provided for children to write on in subjects other than English, do not limit how much the pupils can write.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you and the senior leaders and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I also spoke to the Chair of Governors on the telephone. The school improvement plan was evaluated along with a range of other documents relating to school improvement. Together we visited each classroom to talk to pupils and look at the work in their books.

Context

There have been no changes to staffing or governance since the inspection in October.

Main findings

Leaders and governors demonstrate clear resolve to ensure that the school continues to improve and becomes good as quickly as possible. The actions that were being taken to improve the progress that pupils make in writing prior to the inspection have been accelerated. Your initial monitoring shows that these are already having a positive impact.

Leaders have an astute awareness of the schools strengths and weaknesses and as a result, the improvement plan is thorough, detailed and sharply focussed. It states precisely who is responsible for each action and who will monitor its effectiveness. Governors have been included in the development of the plan and are involved in monitoring the outcomes.

As a result of a thorough audit of pupils' writing, you have a clear idea of the precise areas of the teaching of writing that need to be improved. Teachers have benefitted from training to help them to teach writing more effectively and from the additional resources that have been purchased. Examples of high quality writing have been provided for staff to use as exemplars and this is helping teachers to have higher expectations of the pupils. Classroom and corridor displays show a clear focus on improving the quality of writing. Your monitoring shows that the quality of teaching is improving.

In order to improve punctuation, spelling and grammar, teachers have been provided with a range of training and resources to support their own subject knowledge. This is helping to ensure that they always provide pupils with accurate models of how to spell and punctuate properly. Clear guidance has been created to show which elements of grammar are expected to be taught in each year group. This has increased teachers confidence levels. Daily spelling and grammar sessions have been introduced in Key Stage 2. It is too soon to evaluate the impact of this on pupils' progress.

Detailed plans are in place for a whole school writing initiative called POW, to be launched in January. The aim is to ensure that teachers and pupils have high expectations of all pieces of writing not just that completed in English lessons.

Evidence from the writing books show that there are increased opportunities for pupils to write at length. In some topic books this is also evident however on occasions the worksheets that teachers provide for pupils to record their learning on do not provide enough space for the children to write extended answers.

Teachers are more regularly correcting common errors in pupils' spelling punctuation and grammar. Clear feedback is provided to pupils as to where mistakes have been made however pupils are not often correcting errors for themselves.

Governors provide the school with a high level of challenge and support. They regularly make visits to the school to find out how much progress is being made towards the areas identified in the improvement plan. The minutes from meetings and the reports that are produced after monitoring visits show a good level of understanding of the schools strengths and weaknesses and that governors ask appropriately challenging questions.

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 a good level of challenge and support which has helped the school to make improvements. More recently the amount of support has reduced because the local authority has confidence in the capacity of the leaders and governors to continue to improve the school quickly.

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

Yours sincerely

Rachel Howie
Her Majesty's Inspector