

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 9146
Direct email: clare.benson@serco.com



13 December 2013

Ms L Hatton
The Beacon Primary Short Stay School
Longdon Close
Woodrow South
B98 7UZ

Dear Ms Hatton

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to The Beacon Primary Short Stay School

Following my visit to your school on 13 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:

- bring together academic and behaviour tracking information to give a clear, full picture of the progress that each pupil has made during their time at the school in each key aspect of the school's work
- use the information that already exists about reading, writing and mathematics to show how many pupils have made the nationally expected rate of progress each term and over their time at the school, or more or less than the nationally expected rate, and include this analysis in reports to the management committee and local authority.

HMI will:

- visit the school again in the summer term to look at tracking information and to carry out a work scrutiny and lesson observations alongside the senior leaders.

Evidence

During the visit, I held meetings with you and your deputy headteacher, the Chair of the Management Committee, and a representative of the local authority. The school action plan was evaluated. I briefly visited lessons in both classes.

Main findings

Your action plan is very thorough and focuses closely on the areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The actions have clear timescales although the 'key milestones' are quite broad. The pace of the actions is demanding given the size of your setting. We discussed this and you explained that the management committee are monitoring closely to check that the pace of change is challenging but manageable. You have already taken a number of sensible actions in a short time.

Importantly, you are tailoring the support and professional development offered to different staff to their individual needs. Examples of useful activities include staff observing each other's management of behaviour and visiting local primary and special schools. These activities are carefully recorded by the staff and used to plan the next steps. One teacher, for example, was very analytical about what she had seen in a colleague's classroom and this formed the basis of a useful discussion about the next steps between the teacher and the deputy headteacher. You have held target setting meetings with all teaching assistants and identified their development needs, and started to take action to meet these needs.

You have refined the detailed approach you already had to managing pupils' behaviour. You have realised that not all the staff were in post when the underlying principles of the system were discussed, so the deputy headteacher has organised training and discussion time for staff. A recent 'solutions circle' session, involving the educational psychologist, was part of this. The deputy headteacher's monitoring of the consistency of behaviour management is thorough and leads to actions being taken to improve the consistency further. Around the school, the expectations of pupils' behaviour are clearly displayed. Staff are supported in being consistent by a number of scripts, which help them to use language that is calming and positive but firm and appropriate to the situation.

You have a good range of information about the progress that pupils make. You have identified a way that you think would help you to assess more meaningfully the progress made by pupils who stay for a short period of time. You have good ideas about how this could support your working relationship with mainstream schools to ensure that what you focus on in the six week period is precisely tailored to the

pupils' needs. The way in which you currently analyse your assessment information does not give you all the information you need, as it focuses on averages, which disguises large variations in the progress made by different pupils. You have good information about how pupils have improved their behaviour during the time at The Beacon and we discussed ways in which this information can be brought together to give the overall picture of each pupil's progress.

You have changed the way in which you report to the management committee. The reports are closely focused on the areas for improvement that were set during your section 5 inspection. This is useful and helps the management committee to ask appropriate questions. During the discussions I had with you and the Chair of the Management Committee you agreed a better way of presenting this information in the future to allow them to ask more challenging questions and to recognise the school's successes.

The management committee has focused closely on the areas for improvement from the section 5 inspection. The Chair has a good understanding of the school and its purpose. He is committed to broadening the management committee so it includes members with a breadth of expertise and has already been successful in doing so. The management committee has identified aspects that are unclear since the school's budget became delegated, such as responsibility for buildings and premises, and the Chair is taking action to clarify these with the local authority.

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 is providing relevant support and challenge to the school. Support from a consultant has concentrated on mathematics as well as on general aspects of teaching and learning and has already been helpful. The school improvement adviser meets with you on a regular basis and joint lesson observations are planned to take place next term. The local authority reviews its support frequently and adapts it according to the school's needs.

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

Yours sincerely

Sue Morris-King
Her Majesty's Inspector