

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 6799163
Direct email: lewis.mackie1@serco.com



13 December 2013

Elizabeth Smorfitt
Headteacher
Kingsthorpe Village Primary School
Knights Lane
Kingsthorpe
NN2 6QL

Dear Mrs Smorfitt

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Kingsthorpe Village Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 12 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, governors and the local authority are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- Sharpen up the school improvement plan by including impact measures closely related to pupil progress targets
- Further support improvements in the quality of teaching to enable all learners to make good progress in lessons
- Improve the quality of governance through an external review and the process of reconstitution, commissioned by the local authority.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, other senior and middle leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school improvement plan was evaluated. Other school documentation, including pupil assessment data and quality

assurance information was also examined. I visited classes with you during which we looked at pupils' workbooks and spoke informally with them about their learning.

Context

Since the inspection in October, the subject leader for English, who is also the Key Stage Two lead, has tendered her resignation and will leave at the end of this term. Swift action has been taken by you to ensure that leadership in that area is supported and pupils' are not adversely affected by the change in staffing. In addition, the Chair of Governors is stepping down from her post at the end of this term.

Main findings

You and governors have wasted no time in addressing the key areas for improvement identified in the section 5 report. The school improvement plan rightly focuses on accelerating pupil progress by improving the quality of teaching, especially in the area of writing, mathematics and the quality of marking and feedback. The plans do not accurately link actions to measurable pupil progress targets; this means that monitoring and evaluation activities cannot take place effectively enough. Training and development activities and support from external professionals have already had an impact on the quality of teaching. Marking and feedback is much more consistent across the school; teachers provide important and relevant feedback to pupils and opportunities are provided for pupils to act upon the next steps suggested by the teacher. The quality of this interaction is still in the developmental phase. Lessons plans identify different learners and their needs; teachers are increasingly using this information to provide appropriate challenge and support- further work on this area of teaching is required to accelerate pupil progress for all learners.

Subject leaders are demonstrating increasing confidence in carrying out their monitoring and coaching role effectively. They have all undertaken training and development activities to improve their leadership skills. They communicate clear expectations and have a strong understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.

The Chair of Governors is skilled and capable; her resignation will be a loss to the governing body. She has been acutely aware of the need for the governors to strengthen its membership to meet the needs of the challenges facing a school that requires improvement. An external review of governance and a reconstitution of its membership are therefore recommended.

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 timely and appropriate support for the school, especially for leadership and governance. It has brokered important professional links for the school to help to improve the quality of teaching. As a result of your outward-looking approach to school improvement, the school now has a number of quality school partners from whom good practice can be shared and developed.

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

Yours sincerely

Zarina Connolly
Her Majesty's Inspector