

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

**Direct T:** 0121 679 9161  
**Direct email:** ann.morris@serco.com



7 February 2014

Mrs Pauline Lawrence  
Headteacher  
Martlesham Beacon Hill Primary School  
Black Tiles Lane  
Martlesham  
Woodbridge  
IP12 4SS

Dear Mrs Lawrence

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Martlesham Beacon Hill Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 6 February 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the findings. 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 second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in June 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are not taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the last section 5 inspection. The school should take immediate action to:

- observe teachers and other staff teach more regularly, thoroughly interrogate current progress data and closely scrutinise work in pupils' books to confirm the impact of teaching over time on their learning and progress.
- Validate your views by asking your external partner schools to scrutinise pupils' work over time and report to you what they find.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative from the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last monitoring inspection. Four part-lessons were observed. The amended school

improvement plan and the headteacher's summary of current progress data were evaluated.

## **Context**

Since the last monitoring visit, the assistant headteacher who also taught the Year 6 class has left the school. Her leadership duties are being covered by yourself and two class teachers. Year 6 pupils are being taught by you on three mornings each week. For the rest of the time pupils are taught by a supply teacher appointed on a temporary basis, and a higher level teaching assistant. One teaching assistant has also left the school. One governor have resigned from the governing body.

## **Main findings**

The school's view is that teaching is consistently good and is enabling pupils to make good progress. This is not accurate. Observations of lessons and scrutiny pupils' work by the inspector and a local authority adviser confirmed that teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is giving pupils a good start to their education, but in Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils' progress slows. They work steadily but are not expected to work as hard as they can, particularly the most-able pupils who are capable of achieving much more.

In mathematics lessons, an over-reliance on worksheets or exercises from textbooks fails to stimulate pupils' interest and enthusiasm. Not all teachers explain the best ways of completing calculations or expect pupils to show how they worked out their answers to reinforce their mathematical understanding. Some less able pupils become too reliant on the teacher because they do not understand how to solve problems. Teaching assistants are not always deployed effectively.

You are not leading improvements to teaching, particularly in Year 6 by modelling good practice and checking that agreed policies and procedures are being applied. A scrutiny of pupils' work shows that not all work is presented well enough or completed. Marking is regular and at times suggests the next steps needed to improve, but this is not being followed up by pupils.

The departure of the assistant headteacher and some governors has weakened leaders' capacity to make improvements. Improvement plans have been amended to show the progress the school is making at key intervals, but you are unable to give your full attention to improving teaching and raising achievement due to your additional teaching commitments. Pupils' progress is regularly monitored but this information is not clearly presented to illustrate how well all of them are progressing, or highlight the reasons why some pupils are doing exceptionally well but others are not.

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**

You and your Chair of the Governing Body have attended recent training organised by the local authority and feel that this is helping to reorganise governance. Continued partnership working with other schools in the local cluster and a school improvement partner are providing you with added support and enabling teachers to visit other schools to observe good practice. Support provided by the local authority is valued but you feel that visits by national leader in education has been less effective.

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

Yours sincerely

John Mitcheson  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**