

Serco Inspections
Colmore Plaza
20 Colmore Circus Queensway
Birmingham
B4 6AT

T 0300 123 1231
Text Phone: 0161 618 8524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct T 0121 679 9158
Direct email: rachel.dayan@serco.com



7 February 2014

Ms Jill Davis
Executive Headteacher
Walpole Highway Primary School
School Road
Walpole Highway
Cambridgeshire
PE14 7QQ

Dear Ms Davis

Special measures monitoring inspection of Walpole Highway 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 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 previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in April 2013. The full list of the areas for improvement identified during that inspection is set out in the annex to this letter. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time:

The school is making reasonable progress towards the removal of special measures.

The local authority's statement of action is now fit for purpose.

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

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

Yours sincerely
Paul Tomkow

Her Majesty's Inspector
Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in April 2013

- Improve teaching so that it is at least good by ensuring that all teachers:
 - set work that is appropriate for each pupil's ability
 - provide interesting and relevant activities so that pupils remain engaged in their learning in all parts of lessons
 - improve feedback in mathematics so pupils understand the next steps in their learning
 - deploy support staff more effectively to meet individual pupils' needs
 - ensure pupils improve the presentation of their written work.

- Accelerate pupils' progress and raise their attainment by:
 - checking on the impact of pupil premium funding, and changing how it is used if it is not raising pupils' achievement
 - improving the teaching of reading
 - involving pupils more routinely in assessing how well they have done
 - identifying the reasons why pupils do not attain a higher level and using this analysis to take action to accelerate pupils' progress
 - improving attendance.

- Improve the impact of leadership and management by:
 - making sure systems to check and analyse learning and progress lead to accurate judgements, and using these to develop precise plans for school improvement
 - increasing the rigour of checks on teaching and the performance management of staff, providing teachers with clear feedback about how to make their teaching better
 - providing training for leaders of special needs and subjects, and ensuring they have the time or support they need in order to check and improve progress in their areas
 - ensuring the governing body is given accurate and useful information so it has a clearer understanding of achievement and the quality of teaching.

Report on the second monitoring inspection on 6 February 2014

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with the executive headteacher, teachers and two governors. I also spoke with a representative from the local authority. I observed two lessons with you and also listened to pupils read.

Context

Since the previous inspection, the assistant headteacher has resigned from her management position and is now teaching full time. An acting deputy headteacher has been appointed to the federation of schools, and is currently spending 1.5 days each week at Walpole Highway. This role is confirmed until April 2014. The governing body is currently recruiting a permanent deputy headteacher, who will work across the federation.

Following consultation with the Department for Education (DfE), the school is no longer seeking academy status. Instead, a proposal to extend the current Three School Federation to include West Walton, the school where the executive headteacher is currently the substantive headteacher, is being pursued by governors.

Achievement of pupils at the school

The work seen in books during this inspection, and the school's own data, indicate that, although pupils are now making better progress, the rate of improvement is still too slow and achievement remains low. Better teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is leading to improvements in both reading and writing. Results at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2013 were much improved on the previous two years. The Key Stage 2 results, however, showed that, on average, pupils were two terms behind the national average. School leaders are aware of this underperformance and the need for significant improvement. They have set appropriate targets in order to raise expectation and measure the rate of pupils' progress.

The quality of teaching

Teaching at the school has improved since the previous inspection. Teachers have been provided with professional development opportunities and greater levels of support and challenge from the executive headteacher. The school's own records indicate that teaching is now usually good. This view was supported in the lessons that were seen during the inspection and the work in pupils' books, although the quality of presentation remains a weakness. In the lessons that were observed, teachers set work that was interesting and provided a good level of challenge for most pupils. As a result, pupils worked hard and made good progress in their

learning. Good support was provided by teaching assistants, who supported learning well because they knew about the purpose of the teaching and the specific needs of the pupils they were working with.

Despite improvements in the quality of teaching, the rate of progress that pupils are making at the school needs to be improved still further if more pupils are to achieve the standards expected for their age.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils are generally well behaved. They show respect for each other and for the adults who work with them. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They listen attentively to teachers' instructions and respond promptly. When a younger child exhibited some challenging behaviour, it was well handled by members of staff and minimum disruption was caused before the child engaged once again in the planned learning activity.

Attendance has improved slightly since the previous inspection but it is still below the national average. The school has good systems for monitoring attendance and following up pupil absence.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

School leaders, including governors, have taken appropriate action to address weaknesses identified at the inspection in April 2013. The executive headteacher has introduced good systems to check and analyse the progress that pupils are making. This is helping teachers and teaching assistants to plan learning activities which are more closely matched to pupils' different capabilities. More regular checks are now being made on the quality of teaching, through lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work. These processes are helping school leaders to develop an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

The governing body now has a more well-informed view of the school and the challenges that it faces. This is because the executive headteacher is providing clear and accurate information about the school's performance. As a result, governors are becoming more effective in challenging the school and holding it to account. Importantly, they understand that weaknesses remain and that the quality of teaching needs to improve further in order for achievement to reach an acceptable level. An external review of governance was carried out during the autumn term. The report was only delivered recently, so governors have not yet been able to consider the findings.

External support

Following the judgement at the first monitoring inspection, the local authority has taken appropriate steps to ensure that the statement of action is fit for purpose. The local authority is now providing good support and challenge for the school. It has provided training for teachers and, through the improvement board, is helping to make sure that the school meets the targets it has set for improvement. The local authority has also helped in brokering the services of the acting deputy headteacher.