

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: 01216 799164
Direct email: tim.ogbourn@serco.com



25 February 2014

Sajid Gulzar
Heathfield Primary School
Heathfield Road
Birmingham
B19 1HJ

Dear Mr Gulzar

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Heathfield Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 25 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 first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in November 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.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you and the acting head of school and with the Chair of the Governing Body to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I also had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority. We toured the school, visited lessons and looked at examples of pupils' books. I also evaluated a number of documents including the school action plan. I looked at records from your monitoring of the work of teachers and considered some of the evidence that you have collected about pupils' progress.

Context

Since the section 5 inspection Heathfield Primary school has become part of a federation with Prince Albert Primary School. You have been appointed as permanent executive headteacher for both schools. You have appointed a new member of the senior leadership team who will have particular responsibility for overseeing provision for pupils with disabilities and special educational needs.

Another experienced teacher, with expertise in the teaching of phonics, has been appointed and will join the school after Easter. A new governing body has very recently been established.

Main findings

You and the acting head of school have a very clear understanding of the school's current position and the improvements which must be made in order for the school to be judged as good at the next section 5 inspection. Your plans are rightly focused on improving the quality of teaching in order to accelerate pupils' progress and improve attainment. These plans are thorough and reflect the need to make improvements rapidly. They set out clearly how school leaders and governors will check on whether the plans and the actions taken are being successful.

In a short period of time you have established a comprehensive cycle of monitoring for teaching and learning, including lesson observations and checks on the quality of work in pupils' books. You are also meeting regularly with teachers to discuss pupils' progress and identify any pupils who need additional support in order to make good progress. Your monitoring is currently similar for all teachers but you are rightly considering ways of personalising this, so that more challenge and support is given to those teachers' whose work is most in need of improvement.

Your systems for managing the performance of teachers are tightly focused on improving the quality of teaching and raising pupils' attainment. Targets set for each teacher reflect these key priorities. You have rightly ensured that targets for school leaders reflect their accountability for the work of others.

You have ensured that good support and professional development are provided for teachers and teaching assistants and you have ensured that training is closely linked to the school's main priorities. For example all teachers have received training in the teaching of reading and in the effective use of questioning.

School leaders have worked with colleagues from other schools and from the local authority to moderate their judgements about standards of attainment. Evidence from this work indicates that these assessment judgements are now accurate and reliable. The school should now work with all teachers to develop their skills in assessing pupils' work accurately so that this is consistent across the school.

The impact of the changes you have made is beginning to be seen in classrooms. Monitoring records indicate that the quality of teaching is improving and the work in pupils' books shows that more pupils are now making good progress. Pupils take pride in their work and are keen to talk about what they are learning. One pupil told me that: 'The work is harder now, but that is good because we are learning more.' Other pupils talked positively about the extra challenge tasks that they tackle in mathematics.

The newly established governing body has members with a good range of skills and expertise. The experienced Chair of the Governing Body is clear about the improvements which are necessary and has a good understanding of the importance of the governors' role in challenging and supporting school leaders in order to drive improvement. Because the governing body has been established very recently it is not yet possible to evaluate their systems or measure the impact of their work. With this in mind the proposed external review of governance should be delayed for up to 12 months. This review will then provide a useful evaluation of the effectiveness and impact of governance which can be used to inform and shape further improvement.

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

School leaders are creating opportunities for teachers to work closely with effective colleagues from Prince Albert Primary school and this is having a positive impact on the quality of teaching. The school also works in partnership with a number of other schools and clusters to share good practice. Following a period of more intense involvement and intervention, the local authority is now providing light touch support for this school.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and to the director of Children's Services for Birmingham.

Yours sincerely

Morag Kophamel

Her Majesty's Inspector