

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** 01216 799169  
**Direct email:** mathew.mitchell@serco.com



13 March 2014

Phil Palmer  
Acting Executive Headteacher  
Burton Joyce Primary School  
Padleys Lane  
Burton Joyce  
Nottingham  
NG14 5EB

Dear Mr Palmer

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Burton Joyce Primary School**

Following my visit with Steven Goldsmith, Additional Inspector, to your school on 11–12 March 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 visit was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in May 2013. The full list of the areas for improvement which were 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 school may appoint up to two newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection and they can be allocated to any key stage.

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 Interim Executive Board and the Director of Children's Services for Nottinghamshire.

Yours sincerely

John Rutherford  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## Annex

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is good or better by making sure that:
  - teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are raised and that pupils are given work with the right level of challenge, particularly those capable of reaching higher levels
  - teachers' explanations are not too long so that pupils remain motivated and have more time for independent work
  - teachers' marking gives pupils clear guidance on how their work can be improved and that teachers provide opportunities for them to respond to the advice
  - adults in the Reception classes improve the planning of and support for children's learning, particularly when children are engaged in activities they have chosen for themselves
  - all staff are competent in teaching the links between letters and sounds (phonics).
  
- Improve pupils' progress and raise their achievement in reading and writing by:
  - ensuring that a systematic approach to the teaching of phonics is part of a well-planned strategy for the development of literacy skills in all subjects
  - increasing opportunities for pupils to write at length across a wide range of subjects.
  
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - a sharply focused action plan to improve teaching and raise achievement is implemented, based on the accurate checking of the quality of teaching
  - all staff with leadership roles are provided with the training or support they need to be able to identify and tackle weaknesses in their areas of responsibility
  - the setting of targets for teachers to improve their practice, and related training opportunities, are clearly linked to school improvement priorities that will raise pupils' achievement
  - the governing body is compliant with all statutory responsibilities and that governors have the knowledge and understanding necessary to find out how well the school is doing and hold its leaders to account for its performance
  - an external review of governance is undertaken to assess how this aspect of leadership and management can be improved.

## **Report on the second monitoring inspection on 11–12 March 2014**

### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the school's work, talked to pupils, scrutinised documents and met with the acting executive headteacher, the acting head of school, assistant headteachers, subject leaders, the headteacher of a partner school, eight parents, the Chair of the Interim Executive Board (IEB) and a representative from the local authority.

### **Context**

Since the first monitoring inspection in September 2013, leadership difficulties and disruption to staffing have mostly been resolved.

### **Achievement of pupils at the school**

Lesson observations, pupils' work and school records show that pupils' achievement, overall, has improved considerably since the previous inspection. In reading, writing and mathematics, many more pupils are making progress at the rate expected for them or better. More-able pupils have improved their achievement significantly because teachers have higher expectations for them and set more challenging work. Some groups of pupils are not yet catching up quickly enough, especially the less able, because their lessons and support do not fully meet their learning needs. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are achieving more because a new leader is greatly improving methods for assessing their needs and planning their support.

Pupils are reading much more confidently and competently because teachers and teaching assistants have considerably improved their teaching of letters and sounds (phonics). Pupils are also much better at writing at length in different styles because they are quickly learning the skills required and they are given stimulating subjects to write about. A small number of pupils are supported by pupil premium funding, which is extra money provided by the government for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those in local authority care. The school uses this money effectively to improve the pupils' literacy, numeracy and speaking skills and to ensure they can take part in enriching out-of-school activities. As a result, their progress is improving at the same rapid rate as other pupils. Although they are still about one term behind pupils of their age nationally in reading, writing and mathematics, they are catching up quickly.

### **The quality of teaching**

Pupils' achievement is much higher because the quality of teaching has improved significantly in all classes. The pace of learning is much better because teachers'

explanations are sharply focused on the lesson objective and they include problem-solving activities, discussions and interesting pictures or films to maintain the pupils' attention. In most lessons, teaching is at the correct pitch for all ability groups of pupils. However, in a minority, the level of challenge for some groups has not been planned with sufficient precision to ensure that they do not spend some time on work that is too easy or too hard.

In a growing number of classes, teachers have improved their skills in assessing pupils' progress during lessons and changing course where necessary to provide more challenge or more revision of work that has not been fully understood. In some classes, the quality of marking has improved considerably, especially where pupils are given additional tasks to extend their learning further. This is not consistent in all classes.

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage (Reception classes) has improved enormously since the previous inspection. All activities, whether led by a member of staff or chosen by the children, have a clear learning purpose. While children are busy with tasks they have chosen, teachers and teaching assistants are skilful in using conversation to advance their understanding. Phonic skills are taught in a very systematic, enjoyable way, and children extend their writing or mathematical skills while carrying out such activities as making a pizza. Teachers show children how to use tablet computers, and this makes a significant contribution to their ability to learn on their own.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils' sensible behaviour and positive attitudes to work contribute to a good climate for learning in most classes. Pupils enjoy coming to school and there are no problems with attendance or punctuality. School leaders make cramped indoor and outdoor accommodation as safe and attractive as it can be. Pupils help enormously by using the limited outdoor play areas very responsibly. Plans are in place to reduce pupil admissions and extend the accommodation in order to provide a more spacious environment for learning and playing in the future. The school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe meet requirements.

### **The quality of leadership in and management of the school**

The acting senior leaders, IEB and local authority worked very well together to stabilise the school after a difficult period. Parents appreciate the way that all of these professionals have kept them fully informed of developments and taken account of their views. This has helped enormously to maintain their confidence in the school. Throughout the period of recovery, the school has kept its focus strongly on improving teaching and pupils' achievement.

Following the previous inspection, senior leaders and the IEB agreed a school development plan which set out a clear and ambitious schedule for the rapid improvement of teaching. This is being implemented effectively. Challenging short-term targets for more consistently good teaching and higher achievement are being met. The IEB frequently checks the progress of the plan with rigour, especially in terms of seeking first-hand evidence of its impact on the quality of work in classrooms and pupils' progress. This has helped to maintain the good pace of improvement.

The performance management of teachers and teaching assistants contributes to the improvement of the school. This is because they have challenging individual targets that are directly linked to the targets in the school improvement plan. School leaders help them to meet these targets with a well-planned programme of training and guidance, a significant part of which is provided through a very effective partnership with a nearby school. Teachers confirm that working side by side with colleagues from this school has helped them enormously to improve their skills and confidence. Although teachers and teaching assistants have been required to improve their skills rapidly, their morale is high because of the supportive and encouraging approach of senior leaders. As a result, there is a strong, shared commitment to removing the causes for concern as quickly as possible.

The acting senior leaders have made a good start in developing the leadership skills of the most effective and experienced teachers in order to increase the school's capacity to continue raising pupils' achievement in the future. Assistant headteachers and subject leaders have been in place for one and a half terms and have already prepared plans for improving work in their areas of responsibility. With support from senior leaders, they have also begun to develop new and very useful management tools, such as a clear, practical system for keeping track of pupils' progress and evaluating how good it is. It is too early for these new leaders to have demonstrated that they can independently lead the improvement of teaching and achievement across the school.

Parents' support for the school has grown over the year. They appreciate the information they receive about what their children are learning and they value highly their children's improved progress.

### **External support**

The local authority correctly recognises the strengths of the acting headteachers, the IEB and the partner school in bringing about required improvements. Therefore, they have greatly reduced the intensive support they provided immediately following the previous inspection. They continue to monitor the school closely and provide frank and appropriately challenging reports for leaders and the IEB to inform their own evaluation of the school's progress in removing causes for concern.