

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



20 March 2014

Andrew Hastings
Headteacher
Colville Primary School
Colville Road
Cherry Hinton
Cambridge
CB1 9EJ

Dear Mr Hastings

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Colville Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 19 March 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 October 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. The school should take further action to:

- tackle pupils' under-achievement in writing, especially in Year 4
- focus monitoring activities on the impact of teaching on pupils' progress

Evidence

During the visit, I held meetings with you, the deputy head teacher, a member of the governing body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I also evaluated the school action plans and the school's monitoring and assessment documentation. You accompanied me during visits to lessons, where we observed teaching and looked at pupils' work.

Context

Since the inspection one teacher has gone on maternity leave. A temporary replacement is currently working in the school.

Main findings

Your action plans focus on the right things. Teaching is improving in the school and this is resulting in better pupil progress. Recent progress is stronger in reading and mathematics than in writing. In Key Stage 2, standards in reading are above average in all year groups. In mathematics, progress is a little slower and pupils are on track to reach the national average by the end of Year 6. In contrast, pupils' writing is slightly below average in Years 5 and 6, and is well below average in Year 4.

The systematic teaching of phonics is well established. Clear benefits are apparent from the systematic teaching of this area to groups of pupils with similar abilities. Pupils are familiar with the systems and are increasingly confident when reading new or 'tricky' words. In other areas, the work that more-able pupils do is not always hard enough, and they make less progress than they could.

Marking is improving, and most teachers provide pupils with high quality feedback. Often this is extensive and points pupils to their next steps. In some cases, teachers have taken this further and pupils are beginning to respond to the marking – making comments and showing that they have both read and understood the guidance.

Governors are well informed and understand the steps that you are taking to improve things. They have increased their monitoring role and are providing you with appropriate levels of both challenge and support. You have time-tabled a series of monitoring activities to check on the quality of teaching. These include you and senior leaders looking at teachers' planning, scrutinising pupils' work and watching lessons. However, the outcomes of these activities do not focus sufficiently on pupil progress, and the feedback that teachers receive is not precise enough to accelerate improvements. A more cohesive approach is needed to bring these monitoring activities together and provide more information about exactly what teachers need to work on.

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 is providing effective support for the school. It has commissioned leadership support from a National Leader for Education who is the headteacher of an outstanding school. An advisor from the local authority is supporting your

monitoring activities and your action plans. Another advisory teacher is supporting you with the development of mathematics.

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

Yours sincerely

Christopher Moodie
Her Majesty's Inspector