

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: 0121 6799163
Direct email: lewis.mackie1@serco.com



21 May 2014

Miss Susan Powis
Springfield Primary School
Dudley Road
Rowley Regis
B65 8JY

Dear Miss Powis

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Springfield Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 20 May 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 February 2014. 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:

- ensure that the school's improvement plans have interim success measures and all outcomes are measurable to better enable the effective monitoring of the school's actions to improve.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, your senior leadership team, the Chair, Vice Chair and members of the Governing Body, and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I evaluated the school's plans for improvement, the impact of performance management and the outcomes of monitoring activities. I also reviewed some of the school's achievement data. I visited three classes, talked to a number of pupils and looked at samples of their books.

Main findings

You and your leadership team are working with a greater sense of urgency on the key issues identified in your inspection. Your school improvement plan addresses all the key areas identified in the last inspection and includes suitable actions to drive improvement. Although you have a clear idea of when you intend the school to be a securely 'good' school, your plan lacks interim milestones. The impact of the actions you propose is not measurable. These two missing elements may make it difficult for you, or governors, to ensure the school is making sufficient progress in the agreed timescale.

You are holding teachers more accountable for pupils' progress. You have introduced a new tracking system and increased the frequency of pupils' progress meetings with staff. You expect teachers to use information about pupils' prior learning as part of their lesson planning. Work is better matched to pupils' understanding and the most able have work that is more challenging.

Teachers' use of assessment information is improving. They regularly identify gaps in pupils' learning in line with the new marking policy. Pupils stated they had a better understanding of how to improve their work.

The teaching of letters and sounds (phonics) is improving. Teachers have benefited from training by the local authority in teaching the new scheme for understanding letters and sounds. The approach is more systematic and is taught from Nursery through to Year 4. The new scheme enables teachers and teaching assistants to identify quickly the gaps in pupils' understanding. The literacy coordinator's collaboration with the local authority has developed a new assessment process for letters and sounds to give a more accurate evaluation of pupils' learning. This ensures pupils are better prepared for the next stage in the development of their literacy skills.

The teaching of mathematics is improving. Pupils are grouped by attainment for mathematics and this is improving the challenge, especially for the most able. In a top band Year 4 mathematics lesson pupils competed to complete the greatest number of different permutations for a sum as quickly as possible. The teacher introduced the next activity and swiftly identified those who were ready for more demanding work. This maintained their pace of learning. Pupils stated they were enjoying mathematics more and found the work more interesting.

Governors' understanding of the school's key areas for development is improving. They have a good understanding of their responsibilities and have taken appropriate actions to address the areas for improvement identified in the last inspection. Governors are well informed about the recent improvements to the quality of teaching. Safeguarding records meet statutory requirements and governors understand the need to monitor and maintain up to date records.

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

Local authority representatives make regular visits to the school including consultants have provided a range of support to improve English and mathematics and train governors. The authority has also brokered support through a local teaching school, Lightwoods Primary. This co-ordinated programme is having a positive impact on teaching and leadership.

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

Yours sincerely

Michelle Parker
Her Majesty's Inspector