

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 799154  
Direct email: aidan.dunne@serco.com



30 September 2014

Susan Vint  
Headteacher  
Lakeview School  
The Wixams  
School Lane  
Bedford  
MK42 6BH

Dear Mrs Vint

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Lakeview School**

Following my visit to your school on 29 September 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection 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 section 5 inspection in June 2014.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement. 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:

- identify in its action plan clearly measurable success criteria to help staff, governors and parents know when targets have been reached
- focus monitoring activities, including learning walks, on evaluating the specific improvements planned
- widen the range of evidence used to judge the quality of teaching, ensuring that strengths are shared, particularly the good practice in Key Stage 1
- engage all subject leaders in developing a curriculum that promotes progression, for example by knowing pupils' starting points and goals
- develop further opportunities for parents to support their child's learning, through visits to classes and by providing more detailed information for them.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with you, the assistant headteacher, the leaders of the Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, two governors, and a representative of the local authority. I evaluated the school's action plan and reviewed monitoring records. Safeguarding records and procedures were checked to ensure that requirements were met. I visited classes to see pupils and staff at work, and the playground to observe behaviour at lunchtime.

## **Context**

Since the Section 5 inspection three teachers and three teaching assistants have joined the school due to the school's expansion or to replace staff that have left. A new chair of the governing body started following the inspection.

## **Main findings**

Since the previous inspection, you have:

- written an action plan that addresses the areas requiring improvement
- held the first 'Parent Forum' to discuss the school's actions
- appointed a new leader for mathematics and Key Stage 2
- refined the system for assessing pupils' starting points and method of tracking their progress in English and mathematics
- provided training focused on closing gaps between the achievement of different groups of pupils
- developed a website designed to improve communications with parents
- introduced 'learning journals' throughout the school to promote better writing and mathematical enquiry in the context of different themes.

Your action plan is designed to 'get the school to good' within a year. Senior leaders and governors are evaluating the plan regularly to ensure that actions taken are effective. However, targets are not always clear enough to know how effective. For example, in which subjects do leaders expect to see pupils practising their reading and writing for different purposes, and by when? Similarly, monitoring activities such as 'learning walks' are not precise enough to gather depth of evidence.

Our visits to classrooms indicated that staff are using assessments in English and mathematics consistently well to plan activities and manage support suited to the needs of different pupils. This includes those ready for higher levels of challenge. In a Year 1 class an 'expert' pupil consolidated his understanding by leading the learning of other pupils. In a Year 2 class the teachers' analysis of pupils' starting points in mathematics had led to a strong focus on problem-solving approaches. It is important that staff working with the older pupils in Key Stage 2 observe such strengths in Key Stage 1 in order to build more effectively on pupils' prior learning.

Although all staff are using the school's marking policy some inconsistencies remain in how this is implemented. There are good examples of pupils acting on the

teachers' feedback about how to improve their work, a weakness at the time of the Section 5 inspection. The school's system of using bookmarks which are not removed until pupils have corrected mistakes, is working well. There are also good examples of written feedback by parents which is helping to bridge children's learning between school and home. However, parents are not always given enough information about the purpose of specific homework activities to help focus their support. The Key Stage 1 homework activities are more challenging and develop a wider range of skills than the worksheets often used for Key Stage 2 homework.

The school's use of homework is evidence of leaders responding to parents' views. An external survey of parents' views commissioned by the school indicates a significant shift in opinion. More parents are positive about the school. Pupils' attendance has improved. Opportunities for parents to gain an insight into school life are increasing, for example through the school's new website and parent forum. Nevertheless, opportunities for parents to observe the school at work are limited.

Governors are well aware that closing gaps between different groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and others, remains an important priority. They are closely involved in the school's improvement strategy and are using first-hand evidence increasingly to ask challenging questions.

You have been proactive in making links with good and outstanding schools to moderate the school's assessments and to exemplify the quality of provision and outcomes expected as the school grows Year 5 and 6 pupils. You are using this information to set suitably high expectations. You have taken action to strengthen safeguarding policies and procedures, which meet requirements.

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 level of support provided by the local authority has increased since the school was judged to require improvement. The local authority has commissioned an external review of pupil premium, involved the school in the 'Achievement for All' initiative to close gaps in pupils' achievement, and is planning a programme of leadership coaching.

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

Yours sincerely

Ian Middleton  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**