

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 679 9146
Direct email: clare.benson@serco.com

27 October 2014

Jeremy Chopping
Headteacher
Daubeney Academy
Orchard Street
Kempston
Bedford
MK42 7PS

Dear Mr Chopping

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Daubeney Academy

Following my visit to your school on 22 October 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 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 May 2014. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. At its previous section 5 inspection the school was also judged to require improvement.

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:

- increase the quality of teaching so more of it is outstanding
- implement rigorous plans for the training of teaching assistants
- improve the pupil-support base so that it becomes a stimulating learning environment.

Evidence

During the visit, I met with you and spoke with staff. I met six governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body. I also met the school improvement adviser. You joined me on a tour of the school. I visited classrooms, looked at pupils' work and spoke with them. I read minutes of governing body meetings and some of the

school's policies. I scrutinised your action plan. I checked the single central record for newly appointed staff.

Context

Two new teachers joined the school in September 2014.

Main findings

Soon after the inspection, with the support of staff and governors, you took swift action to address weaknesses. Your plans are rightly focused on improving the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. The strategies used to improve the teaching of more able pupils, through better questioning and better planning of lessons, are already raising expectations. The training of staff seeks to ensure that teaching becomes more consistently good. However, your actions to make teaching outstanding are less clear.

As we visited classes, I noted that most teachers are improving the quality of their marking, although more work is required to ensure that feedback to pupils, either verbally or in writing, is effective. Several pupils told me that they are now given more challenging tasks. They also said that the 'accelerated reading' initiative is encouraging them to read regularly.

The issue identified at the last inspection of raising achievement in literacy and numeracy across the curriculum is being addressed. In several lessons, I saw that key technical vocabulary, such as in science, was reinforced well. There are examples of extended writing on a range of themes displayed around the school. Pupils who need additional support are identified promptly and teaching assistants are on hand to help them make better progress. However, this support is not always as effective as it should be. Teaching assistants require further training to ensure that all interventions are well-targeted and of high quality.

It is too early to see the full impact of improved subject leadership but the subject leaders I met are diligently using their non-teaching time to evaluate the quality of teaching and pupils' progress in their areas of responsibility. You have resolved the issues of data collection and a system is now in place to track progress accurately. There is still some way to go to ensure that subject leaders and teachers make full use of data and all other available information to plan the next stage of pupils' learning.

With the support of the two deputy headteachers you have resolved some challenging staffing issues. Your evaluation of teaching and learning is now more frequent and takes into account a wide range of information such as scrutiny of pupils' book, marking and assessment information. You are successful in maintaining good standards of behaviour and no pupil has been excluded to date. The student-support base requires improvement to make it a more stimulating learning environment where pupils are expected to make good progress.

Governors have clear timelines and processes to check progress against the key issues identified at the inspection. They are driving improvement through the frequent meetings of the Governor School Improvement Group (GSIG) and are visiting the school more often to gather objective evidence of improvements.

External support

The school welcomes the support and challenge that the school improvement adviser provides. Work with the local training school enables staff to share effective practice. Two teachers attended a 'Good to Outstanding Teaching' course and are now sharing their learning with staff. You are actively developing partnerships with the local lower schools with some joint staff training in mathematics. Subject leaders develop their knowledge of the curriculum and assessment through their work with the Kempston cluster of schools.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

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

Yours sincerely

Marianick Ellender-Gelé
Her Majesty's Inspector