

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:** 0121 679 9163  
**Direct email:** lewis.mackie1@serco.com



26 November 2014

Teresa Allport  
Headteacher  
Brierley Hill Primary School  
Mill Street  
Brierley Hill  
DY5 2TD

Dear Mrs Allport

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Brierley Hill Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 25 November 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 second 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:

- continue use information about pupils' achievement effectively in order to ensure that teachers make learning challenging for all groups of pupils
- further strengthen the skills of new subject leaders so that they contribute effectively to the work of senior leaders
- continue to work with pupils and families to improve the attendance of those who do not attend as regularly as they should and close the gap with the national average for primary schools.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with you and other senior leaders. I also met with the subject leaders for English and mathematics, a group of pupils, the

Chair of the Governing Body and a representative from the local authority. A range of documentation was reviewed including feedback to staff following lesson observations and reviews of pupils' work, and the latest information about pupils' achievement. You joined me on brief visits to classrooms to review pupils' learning and talk to pupils about their work. The school improvement plan was evaluated.

## **Context**

There have been no significant changes since the previous monitoring inspection.

## **Main findings**

You and other senior leaders, including governors, have rapidly responded to the issues raised in the previous monitoring inspection. A considerable amount of work has been done in a short space of time. You have taken swift steps to ensure that the school improvement plan contains measurable, time-specific success criteria related to the progress and attainment of different groups of pupils. This is helping all leaders, including governors, to check the impact of actions taken within the timescale set and to have an accurate picture of the school's performance.

The revised tracking system is a positive step. You are now able to identify the progress over time of different groups of pupils more easily. You are beginning to use this information effectively in order to ensure that teachers make learning challenging for all groups of pupils. Your written feedback to teachers about their work shows that you are starting to identify precise actions that teachers should take to accelerate the progress of different ability groups. As a result teachers are clear about what is expected of them and how they are held accountable for pupils' achievement.

You have introduced a programme of coaching and professional learning so that all teachers can learn from the best practice in the school. Your records show that teaching has continued to improve since the previous monitoring inspection. This is confirmed by your latest assessment information which shows that more pupils are working at the standards expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. An increasing proportion of pupils are working at higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics. However, you recognise that there is more work to be done to further improve the impact of teaching on pupils' achievement in all classes.

New subject leaders for English and mathematics have started to use information about pupils' achievement to successfully lead improvements in their subjects. With support and guidance from local authority advisers they are strengthening their leadership skills and beginning to contribute effectively to the work of senior leaders. The learning environment has significantly improved since my previous monitoring visit. Pupils talk positively about this change. Their comments include, 'The display boards in our classrooms help us to learn. You can always find something on them

to remind you or help you if you are stuck' and 'Our log books help us to know how well we are doing because we can see our own improvements.' As a result, more pupils are beginning to demonstrate pride in their work and positive attitudes to learning.

Leaders continue to work with parents and a range of external providers to improve attendance. Pupils understand the importance of attending school regularly and they value the systems in place to reward good attendance, such as celebration assemblies and invitations to tea with Mrs Allport. Although the current attendance figure is above the figure for the equivalent period in 2013, it is not yet in line with the national average for primary schools.

Governors have acted quickly to strengthen their understanding of information about pupils' achievement. They have attended appropriate training and, as a result, have an accurate view of how well the school is doing. This means that they are able to support and challenge school leaders further. The Chair of the Governing Body meets frequently with senior leaders to check the school's progress against the targets set in the improvement plan. Documentation shows that governors are asking challenging questions about assessment information.

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**

Since my previous monitoring visit, you have received a good level of support and challenge from the local authority. Regular visits from your school improvement officer have helped you to keep focused and continue to move the school forward. Governors value the training provided by the local authority. They have a better understanding of information about progress and attainment of different groups of pupils. Your local school support network has also contributed to the school's stability and continued improvement.

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

Yours sincerely

Marilyn Mottram  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**