

Serco Inspections
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



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Mrs Victoria Giliker
Headteacher
Fairfield Endowed CofE (C) Junior School
Boarstone Lane
Fairfield Buxton
Derbyshire
SK17 7NA

Dear Mrs Giliker

Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit to Fairfield Endowed CofE (C) Junior School

Following my visit to your school on 1 December 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on the findings of my visit. 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 July 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.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, English, mathematics and religious education subject leaders, three representatives of the governing body, a group of pupils and a representative of the local authority, to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I evaluated your plans for improvement. I considered documentation relating to the monitoring of teaching and reviewed your most recent data on pupils' progress and attainment. We conducted a tour of the school together and visited all classes to see pupils and staff at work.

Context

Two teachers left the school at the end of the summer term 2014. The governing body has appointed two newly-qualified teachers who commenced their posts in September 2014.

Main findings

Despite the disappointment of the previous inspection, you, your staff and governors are working with determination to tackle the areas requiring improvement. Your school improvement plan is linked tightly to the areas for development in the inspection report and identifies clear measures of progress which you are using to inject greater urgency into school improvement.

You are focusing sharply on those aspects of teaching identified by the section 5 inspection in need of the most improvement, such as making sure the work is hard enough for all pupils, particularly the most-able. Pupils spoke about the improvements which are taking place. For example, they were keen to tell me about the regular opportunities they have to respond to teachers' marking and to show me how this is helping them to improve their work. You have reviewed the teaching of spelling, grammar and punctuation. There has been a sharper focus this term on the application of grammar. In mathematics, new resources are being used to help pupils develop their skills in reasoning and problem solving and there are increasing opportunities for them to apply their mathematical skills in a range of other subjects.

You are beginning to develop the roles and skills of subject leaders, particularly in English and mathematics. They have made a rapid start this term and are already becoming familiar with trends in reading, writing and mathematics skills across the school as a result of their monitoring activities. Teachers are working hard to apply the subsequent guidance they receive from subject leaders in order to have an impact on pupils' learning.

The governing body is supporting you in forging closer links with the feeder infant school. A positive start has been made this term and you have met with the headteacher at the infant school to discuss issues and plan future meetings and activities. There is a clear commitment to more joint working in the future.

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 a wide range of support. In particular, it has undertaken some paired monitoring activities, including assessment and moderation of work in Year 3. You welcome this good support and the regular visits made by the

senior improvement adviser to check on progress and to challenge you on the impact of your leadership.

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

Yours sincerely

Dorothy Bathgate
Her Majesty's Inspector