

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 9169
Direct email: mathew.mitchell@serco.com

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Marie-Claire Bretherton
Executive Headteacher
Benjamin Adlard Primary School
Sandsfield Lane
Gainsborough
DN21 1DB

Dear Mrs Bretherton

Special measures monitoring inspection of Benjamin Adlard Primary School

Following my visit to your academy on 5 March 2015, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the academy's recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the academy became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in November 2014.

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with the executive headteacher; the acting head of school; subject leaders for English and mathematics; a representative from the CfBT Schools Trust, who is the Chair of the Rapid Improvement Board; and another member of the Rapid Improvement Board. A range of documentation was considered including: the most recent data on the achievement of pupils; information relating to the safeguarding of pupils; information relating to the behaviour and attendance of pupils; and minutes of the Rapid Improvement Board's meetings. I made short visits to lessons, looked at work in pupils' books, and spoke to pupils informally about their learning.

The sponsor's statement of action and the academy's action plan were evaluated.

Context

Since the previous inspection, an executive headteacher, who is a National Leader of Education, has been appointed to oversee this and two other schools on a permanent basis. A permanent head of school has also been appointed, and will take up post after Easter. The leadership team has been restructured, and the Rapid Improvement Board has been reconstituted. A new Year 3 teacher has been appointed, and will begin after Easter.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

Leaders have responded positively to the inspection findings, and have acted swiftly to address the areas for improvement identified in the inspection. The academy sponsor, the CfBT Schools Trust, has secured the leadership of the school following the resignation of the previous headteacher, and is providing effective support from two partner schools within the Trust, one of which has been judged by Ofsted to be outstanding.

The executive headteacher has a strong vision for the academy and is highly ambitious for its success. Supported by the acting head of school, she has already brought about many improvements. The quality of work in pupils' books is rapidly improving, and pupils have a renewed sense of pride in their work and in their school. Leaders are successfully creating a culture of high expectations for all, and now have greater ambition for what all pupils, including those newly arrived to the school, can achieve. They have introduced a better system to track the progress that pupils are making and to analyse how well different groups of pupils are doing. Teachers have clearer information about pupils' starting points and can take this into account when planning lessons. As a result, they are beginning to ensure that lessons are more challenging for more-able pupils. Teachers are more accurate in their assessment of how well pupils are doing because they are working closely together, and with colleagues from partner schools, to ensure that they have a common understanding of pupils' attainment.

Leaders at all levels now have a much clearer understanding of their roles and responsibilities, and the additional support from partner schools is enabling the new leadership team to focus on the right priorities for improvement. Subject leaders are providing effective support to teachers to improve the teaching of mathematics and literacy, and to increase the opportunities for pupils to practise their writing and calculation skills across different subjects. Pupils are responding with enthusiasm and excitement to the new curriculum, which gives them opportunities to learn about other cultures and faiths, and to learn about what life in a modern democracy means. They are excited about their forthcoming trip to the Houses of Parliament,

and were keen to tell me how much they are enjoying their learning. Their enjoyment of school is evident in their improving attendance and punctuality, in the quality of their homework, and in display work around the school.

Governance has been much strengthened by the formation of a new Rapid Improvement Board, with the right skills and expertise to hold school leaders to account. Members have a clear view of the academy's strengths and areas for development. They are closely focused on the areas for improvement identified during the inspection and are committed to helping the academy make rapid progress.

The Trust knows the academy well and is working effectively with leaders to quality assure the work of the school. It has produced a detailed statement of action to guide its improvement. The statement has set an ambitious but realistic timetable for the removal of special measures, and accurately reflects the priorities for improvement.

The academy's action plan shows how actions are spread across the timescale, with short-term targets in place that indicate precisely how much progress will be made by key points. It is clear who is responsible for leading specific actions, who will check that they have been carried out, and who will evaluate their impact.

Following the monitoring inspection, the following judgements were made:

The sponsor's statement of action is fit for purpose.

The academy's action plan is fit for purpose.

Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion that the academy may appoint newly qualified teachers.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Rapid Improvement Board, and the Director of Children's Services for Lincolnshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Deirdre Duignan
Her Majesty's Inspector