

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 9154  
**Direct email:** aidan.dunne@serco.com



3 March 2015

Sarah Batstone  
Rounds Green Primary School  
Brades Road  
Oldbury  
B69 2DP

Dear Dr Batstone

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Rounds Green Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 2 March 2015, 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 month and year. 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:

- provide additional detail to the school action plan so that it identifies: those members of staff responsible for the specific actions relating to the areas for improvement identified in the last inspection; those who will monitor the implementation of planned improvement; and those who will evaluate the school's effectiveness in bringing about the necessary improvements.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school improvement plan was evaluated. Her Majesty's Inspector also considered minutes of governing body meetings, the headteacher's reports to governors, records of

leaders' monitoring, training programmes and an evaluation of improvements achieved to date.

## **Main findings**

You have a detailed school improvement plan which identifies the necessary actions for ongoing school development over a three year period. The actions and intended outcomes are clear. The plan identifies those responsible for leading initiatives and those who will monitor. However, the action plan, written in response to the areas for improvement identified in the last inspection, lacks the same degree of clarity. Links with the three year plan are evident. Nevertheless, staff responsible for leading actions are not identified and there are no timescales to indicate when improvements are expected. Those who are responsible for monitoring the implementation of the plan and evaluating the effectiveness of actions are not identified. As a consequence, the plan is vague and monitoring and evaluating are potentially impeded. Your progress summaries are helpful and the positive outcomes are well balanced with areas that require further work.

The deputy headteacher identified significant gaps in pupils' mathematical knowledge and differing rates of pupils' progress across the school. He has established a detailed training programme to improve teachers' mathematical subject knowledge. Senior leaders observe lessons, scrutinise pupils' work and analyse pupils' progress to inform general and specific staff training needs. They focus staff meetings on identified priorities to improve teaching and learning in mathematics. In addition, leaders provide opportunities for staff to plan lessons together so that they can identify where support is needed and establish the resources necessary to support pupils' learning.

In the main, teachers have risen to the raised expectations of them. Leaders proactively identify emerging strengths within the school so that good practice is shared and modelled. Leaders and the local authority advisor confirm that the level of challenge for pupils has improved in mathematics lessons. As a result, pupils are developing a genuine interest in their lessons and they are keen to succeed. Members of staff from a local outstanding primary school work with staff from Founds Green to improve pupils' mathematical problem solving. Each unit of study is introduced by posing a problem. The pupils must learn, develop and apply new mathematical skills to find a solution. This initiative has helped pupils to realise that mathematical skills are relevant and essential in everyday life.

Pupils' progress and achievement is assessed every half term and tracking data show that pupils' progress in mathematics, although improved, remains slower than in other subjects. Leaders and staff do not meet often enough to review pupils' progress. As a consequence, leaders are unable to identify with sufficient speed those pupils in danger of falling behind and plan the necessary targeted intervention. The pupil progress tracking systems, combined with leaders' examination of pupils' work in books, have helped them to identify inaccurate teacher assessments.

Senior leaders share monitoring tasks with the recently appointed middle leaders to develop their skills in this area of work. These paired activities have helped middle leaders to observe, evaluate and verbally feedback to staff. Leaders have developed a detailed monitoring schedule which is supported by suitably broad criteria so that evaluations consider a range of indications. However, these indicators are not sufficiently focused on subject-specific aspects to ensure explicit and targeted subject improvement.

Many of the governors are recently appointed. Nevertheless, training events, classroom visits, book scrutinies and discussions with parents and pupils, have ensured their speedy and effective acquisition of knowledge about the school. They are keen to be involved and make best use of their considerable expertise. They are increasingly confident and able to seek information for themselves. The Chair of the Governing Body is also a National Leader of Governance and is currently working with the school on a consultancy basis. You and the Chair of the Governing Body are suitably aware of the need to keep the two roles independent of each other. The local authority is keeping the arrangement under review.

Governors have eagerly taken up their responsibilities. They have restructured the administrative arrangements, reviewed school policies, contributed to performance management and recruited further teaching staff. Governors are using their specific skills to contribute appropriately to the school's work. For example, one governor has conducted a fire safety check and another has led a health and safety audit of the school premises. The Chair of the Governing Body meets you every week to consider the school's progress against planned actions and outcomes. He knows the school in detail and skilfully holds leaders to account through his in-depth monitoring. Ongoing training is planned for governors in response to the review of governance using a range of sources so that they continue to develop their skill and confidence.

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 representatives know the school well and have provided relevant support for example, in recent mathematics training. The local authority advisor has conducted a recent review of teaching and learning which included lesson observations and a scrutiny of pupils' books. The local authority advisor was able to confirm leaders' evaluations and findings as accurate.

Leaders have commissioned additional support from Hales Valley Teaching School, Shireland Collegiate Academy and independent consultants to help improvements in specific areas of challenge.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Sandwell local authority and as below.

Yours sincerely

Deana Holdaway  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

The letter should be copied to the following:

- Chair of the Governing Body
- Local authority