

Serco Inspections

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Fiona Wiseman

Interim Headteacher

Kingston Centre (Primary PRU)

Valley Park Campus

Cromer Gardens

Wolverhampton

WV6 0TD

Dear Mrs Wiseman

Special measures monitoring inspection of Kingston Centre (Primary PRU)

Following my visit to your school on 17 June 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 school's recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in February 2015.

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with you, two representatives of the local authority and with the Chair and two other members of the Management Committee. I toured the centre with you on two occasions, during which I was able to speak informally to pupils. The local authority's statement of action and the school's improvement plan were evaluated.

Context

You are the third interim headteacher of the Kingston Centre since September 2014 and you started on 13 April 2015. The interim headteacher who was in post at the time of the last inspection is now a member of the management committee.

The new management committee was formed during the last inspection. They have advertised the vacancy of permanent headteacher and are due to interview for this position over the coming weeks.

There are currently three teachers and three teaching assistants who are not at work. You have chosen to cover the work of teachers by using higher level teaching assistants and combining class groups. The work of the absent teaching assistants is being covered by supply staff.

The number of pupils attending the Kingston Centre has reduced since the last inspection. A higher level teaching assistant is working at New Park School, supporting pupils who previously attended the Kingston Centre.

The last inspection was conducted in February 2015 and the Ofsted report was published on the 6 May 2015.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

You, the local authority and management committee all demonstrate a strong desire to improve the quality of the centre's work. You are all realistic about the extent of the challenge ahead. The previous inspection highlighted a considerable number of actions the centre must take in order to improve, and you have started to address these.

Leaders have rightly ensured that they have reviewed policies for the safeguarding of pupils and behaviour management since the previous inspection. During my visit, I was provided with evidence about how you and other leaders have acted quickly on incidents regarding the safety of pupils. There continues to be an inconsistency in the management of pupils' behaviour, however, and I observed several incidents of challenging behaviour during my visit.

Since the previous inspection, leaders correctly identified that a number of pupils were incorrectly placed at the Kingston Centre. New school placements have been found for these pupils in either mainstream or special schools. One member of your staff team is supporting pupils at New Park School during this time of change. This has led to a reduction in the number of pupils receiving education in the Kingston Centre building and provided an opportunity to improve the quality of teaching and improve pupils' behaviour. The plan is for a very small number of pupils to receive education at the Kingston Centre in September 2015. When pupils attend the centre, it will be with the view that they will return to a school as quickly as possible.

You shared with me that a safeguarding audit had taken place and that a health and safety committee had been established. You have strengthened the security of the building and decorated corridors to make them more attractive spaces. You have identified a classroom where nurture activity will take place and have attempted to organise training for staff in this area of work. You and other centre leaders also recognise the need to further develop pupils' access to outside areas.

Since the last inspection, the local authority has linked the centre up with a local outstanding primary school and rigorously supported the improvement of the management committee. The Chair of the Management Committee is well placed to ensure that the centre's leaders are held to account for their work and that the local authority are supporting and challenging appropriately.

The local authority conducted a review of the centre on 20 May. Their report states that, 'Overall the school is not making adequate progress against its Ofsted priorities.' Two days ago, a new school improvement adviser for the centre started work for the local authority. The previous school improvement adviser has a clear view about how the local authority will support the centre to improve from this point on.

You have recently written a school improvement plan and established an upcoming sequence of meetings for teachers regarding the improvement of their skills and knowledge, including matching work to pupils' different abilities and using marking to support pupils' learning. You told me that both you and the deputy headteacher are busy each day supporting colleagues to improve the behaviour of the pupils, and this takes time away from completing work to address the centre's priorities. The centre's improvement plan needs to include details of which specific members of staff will complete the actions and precisely when they will do them. The plan also needs to contain details about who will monitor the impact of these actions and when this will be completed. The plan would benefit from having information about how much money each action will cost, so that the management committee can effectively monitor the centre's budget.

The local authority's statement of action contains key milestones and is a useful document which leaders are using to improve the centre. The statement of action and centre improvement plan would both benefit from further detail about how to consult with parents and carers about the development of the centre.

Following the monitoring inspection, the following judgements were made:

The local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose.

The school's improvement plan is not fit for purpose.

The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the chair of the management committee and the Director of Children's Services for Wolverhampton local authority. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Phil Harrison
Associate Inspector