

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 9165
Direct email: victoria.mortimore2@serco.com



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Mrs Joanne Baillie
Headteacher
Kilburn Infant and Nursery School
The Flat
Kilburn
Belper
Derbyshire
DE56 0LA

Dear Mrs Baillie

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Kilburn Infant and Nursery School

Following my visit to your school on 2 July 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 March 2015. 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:

- ensure that the findings from your checks on teaching are drawn together more sharply to provide staff with precise guidance on how to improve the quality of their practice
- ensure that the school's action plan clearly distinguishes between those responsible for leading actions and those who act in the role of evaluator

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with: senior leaders; five members of the governing body; a representative of the local authority; and six pupils from Key

Stage 1, to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I evaluated your plans for improvement. I reviewed your most recent data relating to pupils' achievement. I visited each class and considered the quality of pupils' learning in a range of subjects. I looked at the school's documentation relating to the safeguarding of pupils.

Context

Since the section 5 inspection in March 2015, two members of staff have returned to the school following temporary leave. Both the leader responsible for the Early Years Foundation Stage and the leader responsible for Key Stage 1 and English have recommenced their roles at the beginning of the summer term 2015. The governing body has appointed a teaching assistant to work in the nursery from September 2015. Two parent governors have been appointed and commence their role from 8 July 2015.

Main findings

Staff have responded positively to the training that they have received on how to teach phonics (letters and the sounds they make) more effectively. Pupils are being given additional time and more focused activities to help them to develop their skills in phonics. They are given more activities to apply these skills to support their development in reading and writing. Teachers are planning more carefully the questions they are posing during lessons to deepen pupils' thinking. This is helping to provide more challenge to the most-able pupils.

The leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage has ensured that children are given more activities to choose from to help them to develop their understanding of the world. Children have been given more chances to learn outside, focusing upon topics such as 'butterflies', 'wildlife' and 'growth'. This has helped them to deepen their understanding of life and living processes. Children have been given access to a broader range of activities that encourage them to be creative in their responses. As a result, children are producing a wider range of artwork and models that are celebrated by being displayed in corridors and classrooms.

You and the leader responsible for English have begun to undertake more regular checks on teaching. While this is helping you to identify strengths, your findings are not always drawn together systematically or sharply enough to provide staff with detailed guidance on how to improve their practice.

The governing body has drawn up a clear plan for improvement that sets out what the school intends to do to address the areas identified for improvement at the most recent inspection. Nevertheless, the plan often assigns the same person to lead actions and to evaluate whether they have been successful or not. This makes it difficult for the evaluator to be objective when judging the extent to which actions have had a positive impact on the school's improvement.

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 continues to provide effective support to the school. The local authority advisor has undertaken an audit of the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This has led to adults providing more focused activities to support the development of children's skills in communication and mathematics. The local authority has deployed a teaching and learning consultant to train staff so that they have a better understanding of how to teach phonics.

Staff have benefited from visiting Hasland Infant School in Chesterfield. This has raised the expectations of teachers of what pupils can achieve.

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

Yours sincerely

David Carter
Her Majesty's Inspector