

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



20 November 2015

Mrs Louisa Dormer
Headteacher
Bushy Hill Junior School
Sheeplands Avenue
Merrow
Guildford
Surrey
GU1 2SG

Dear Mrs Dormer

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Bushy Hill Junior School

Following my visit to your school on 12 November 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 May 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 in order to become a good school. The school should take further action to:

- sharpen the action plan so that it includes measurable outcomes to evaluate accurately the success of different groups of pupils.

Evidence

During the inspection, I met with you and senior leaders, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. I visited classrooms and looked at pupils' work with the English and mathematics leaders. I spoke with some pupils about their work. I looked at a range of documents and evaluated the school's action plan. I checked the single central record.

Context

The deputy headteacher is absent. An interim deputy headteacher took over in September 2015. A new teacher has very recently started in Year 3.

Main findings

You have increased your efforts to drive improvements in teaching and learning. Recent school performance information shows that standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are improving and pupils are making better progress, particularly in reading and mathematics. Nevertheless, you know that there is still work to do. Senior and middle leaders are taking increasing responsibility for raising standards. They are making regular checks on teaching and learning. Teachers receive helpful feedback and support that is enabling further improvements. For example, pupils' books show that teachers have made some necessary reductions to marking and have increased their expectations of pupils. As a result, pupils are using teachers' feedback more to improve their work. They recognise that the orange pen tells them that they need to correct a calculation or improve their word choices. You are making better use of expertise within the school to develop individual teachers. Senior and middle leaders are striving to provide challenge and support to teachers and teaching assistants. Consequently, teaching is improving.

Leaders have redesigned the curriculum to enable pupils to make better progress. Changes to the way that mathematics is taught are particularly effective. Pupils' mathematics books show evidence of good progress across the school. Teachers now use information from checks on pupils' learning to plan activities that match their abilities better. Pupils' mathematical development is well supported by the use of pictures, diagrams and practical equipment. In Year 5, pupils were learning how to subtract fractions and found it easier to draw the fractions first. The 'chocolate bars' helped them to easily see what fraction was left. However, teachers are not yet providing pupils with enough opportunities to apply their problem-solving skills.

In English and mathematics, teachers are beginning to work closely with different groups of pupils each day to reduce misconceptions and provide further challenge. As one pupil said: 'It helps me to see what I need to do.' Teachers are planning exciting units of work in English to develop pupils' writing. For example, in Year 4, pupils are writing about exploration in Antarctica. There is a stronger focus on spelling, grammar and punctuation. Nevertheless, rates of progress in writing vary across classes. Changes to the way that writing is taught are very new. In the best examples, teachers have wasted no time in implementing them and pupils' progress is accelerating. Subject leaders have adapted plans for other subjects to give pupils greater opportunities to increase their knowledge and write at length. However, it is too early to see the impact of this work.

Support for disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is much more focused. Leaders use pupil progress information to match

support closely to pupils' needs. Additional support is planned carefully and systems are in place to track the progress of each pupil. Teachers and teaching assistants have received helpful training in the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make). As a result, teachers are starting to provide helpful support to pupils who are at an early stage of reading. The review of the school's use of the pupil premium enabled leaders to identify pupils at risk of underachievement and to direct resources to accelerate learning. Although interventions are under way, leaders have not evaluated the impact because pupil progress information is not yet available.

Governors are determined to secure improvements, particularly for pupils most at risk of underachievement. They have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses because they ask leaders searching questions. For example, they know how the pupil premium funding is being spent. Governors attend the local authority review committee that holds leaders to account and checks progress against the school's action plan. The action plan sets out clearly how leaders are addressing each of the areas for improvement. The plan contains detailed actions and states who is responsible for each. For instance, there are clear plans to implement a new way of measuring and tracking pupils' progress. These include working with other schools to check that teachers' judgements are correct. However, the timescales for actions are not always clear. The plan contains some measurable outcomes that enable leaders to evaluate pupils' progress. Nonetheless, these are not sufficiently focused on securing improvements in learning, particularly for different groups of pupils.

Ofsted may carry out further monitoring inspections and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

The local authority has provided significant support to the school over time. Advisers provided a high level of support to senior leaders and led some essential improvements when leadership was subject to a number of changes. More recently, advisers have provided effective training for middle leaders. As a consequence, middle leaders have secured improvements in teaching and learning. You now choose what help you receive and work with a strong local network of schools. Your regular meetings with a local leader of education have enabled you to make accurate judgements about the school's effectiveness.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Surrey. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Caroline Dulon
Her Majesty's Inspector