

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



27 May 2021

Tabitha Smith
Headteacher
Offmore Primary School
Wordsworth Crescent
Kidderminster
Worcestershire
DY10 3HA

Dear Mrs Smith

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Offmore Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 11 May 2021, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the monitoring inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The monitoring inspection was carried out under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005 and has taken place because the school has received three successive judgements of requires improvement at its previous section 5 inspections.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the 2020-21 COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. I discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in my evaluation.

Having considered the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time:

Leaders and those responsible for governance are taking effective action in order for the school to become a good school.

Context

There have been very few changes in staff since the previous section 5 inspection. This stability has allowed school leaders to focus on school improvement work despite the impact of COVID-19. One new teacher has joined the school. A governor has left, and one new governor has joined.

Main findings

You lead the school with energy and determination. You have fostered a 'no excuses' culture. You ensure that the work to drive school improvement continues despite the challenges of COVID-19. Leaders have a clear vision and communicate it well. They are ambitious about what the school can achieve. Consequently, the school has improved since the last section 5 inspection. Staff recognise this improvement. Staff say that they are proud and happy to work at Offmore Primary School.

Leaders work as a team. Their roles are clear. They have benefitted from a rich diet of professional development over the last two years. Six leaders have taken professional leadership qualifications. As a result, leaders have grown in confidence. They now provide effective training for other staff. This training helps staff to be more skilful in their work. For example, teaching assistants have become more expert in supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This has led to some teaching assistants working in 'specialist' teams to help pupils with complex needs.

School improvement plans are well focused. Leaders check the impact of their plans regularly. These plans have rightly prioritised raising standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders have started to plan for improving the curriculum in the foundation subjects. However, you have not yet set clear targets for when these plans must be completed.

Leaders have worked hard to improve the quality of curriculum plans in reading, writing and mathematics. They have ensured that staff know how to teach these subjects well. Consequently, staff are more confident in teaching these subjects. Teachers have a good understanding of what pupils should know and remember year by year. This means that adults can accurately check the progress that pupils are making. This has been an important part of the work that teachers have done since all pupils returned to school on 8 March 2021. Staff have identified pupils who have fallen behind and taken swift action to help them catch up.

Pupils experience a broad range of subjects. You were asked at the last monitoring inspection to further develop assessment in foundation subjects. This work has now started in history, geography and science. Curriculum leaders are carefully considering the subject specific knowledge and vocabulary that they expect pupils to know. They are also shaping the order in which this content is taught. However, this work is in its early stages. Plans to improve some foundation subjects such as art and design and computing are not yet fully in place.

The effectiveness of governance has strengthened considerably. Governors regularly reflect upon the success of their actions to support and challenge school leaders. They welcome opportunities to receive relevant training about their roles and responsibilities. This training has helped governors to reinforce their systems for

holding leaders to account. Some governors focus on specific areas of school improvement. For instance, one governor is responsible for the quality of education in English and mathematics. Governors are aware that leaders have begun to focus on improving the curriculum in foundation subjects. They plan to monitor the actions that leaders take to improve these subjects.

Leaders, including those responsible for governance, now have well thought out strategies for using additional funding. They evaluate the impact that these strategies have. For example, some pupil premium and COVID-19 catch-up funding has been used to deploy additional adults in lessons since 8 March 2021. These adults – ‘the catch-up crew’ – provide swift targeted support to pupils who need extra help. Consequently, many pupils have already caught up and others are on track to do so.

Additional support

Leaders, including those responsible for governance, have actively sought support from external partners. Local authority support is highly valued by school leaders. They respond well to any advice they are given. For example, a school improvement advisor recently reviewed school governance. This guidance has helped to develop governors’ understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

Work with other school improvement partners, including a national leader of education, has had a positive impact on leaders’ actions to improve reading and writing. In addition, some curriculum leaders have benefitted significantly by working with subject specialist in other local schools. This has helped leaders to develop good practice in planning the curriculum.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior leaders, curriculum leaders and pupils. I also discussed the actions taken since the last inspection with representatives of those responsible for governance and a representative of the local authority.

I examined the school’s single central record of background checks on adults working in the school. I also reviewed the school’s self-evaluation, improvement plan and minutes of governors’ meetings. I scrutinised curriculum plans alongside pupils’ workbooks and listened to pupils reading to an adult.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children’s services for Worcestershire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Leonard
Her Majesty's Inspector