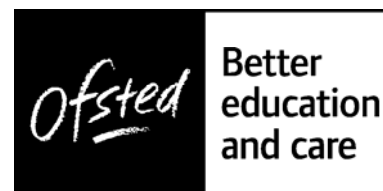


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26 April 2006

Miss J Matthiae
The Acting Headteacher
Broadmeadow Junior School
Monyhull Hall Road
Kings Norton
Birmingham
B30 3QJ

Dear Miss Matthiae

SERIOUS WEAKNESSES: MONITORING INSPECTION OF BROADMEADOW JUNIOR SCHOOL

Introduction

Following my visit with Fiona Robinson, Additional Inspector, to the school on 28 and 29 March 2006, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was a return monitoring inspection. The first visit took place in July 2005 after the school was found to have serious weaknesses at its inspection in January 2005.

This letter will be published on the Ofsted website. Please inform the Regional Inspection Service Provider of any factual inaccuracies within 24 hours of receipt of this letter.

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents, and met with you, the deputy headteacher, senior management team, chair of governors, all teachers, groups of pupils and representatives from the local authority (LA).

Context

The headteacher retired at the end of the first half of the autumn term 2005. Subsequently the governors, in consultation with the LA, appointed you as the acting headteacher and the literacy coordinator as the acting deputy headteacher, initially until 31 December 2006. The governors are currently seeking to recruit a

substantive headteacher to lead and manage the school from either 1 September 2006 or 1 January 2007.

Achievement and standards

While standards are below average and too many pupils are either six months or a year behind in their work, they are starting to make better progress. As a result, standards are rising. Almost three quarters of the pupils are on track to make satisfactory progress by the end of the summer term 2006. A few pupils have made exceptional progress in writing. However, the gap between what the pupils are currently attaining and what they are expected to achieve for their age is not yet closing at a sufficiently speedy rate in all year groups. The results of the 2005 national tests generally reflected this picture. Standards in English, mathematics and science were below the national average and the value added to the pupils' achievements was too low.

Progress on the area for improvement identified by the inspection in January 2005:

- raise standards and improve pupils' achievement in English and mathematics by ensuring that due account is taken of the pupils' standards on entry to school, as measured by their test results at the end of Year 2, when setting their individual targets and planning their lessons—satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

The pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Pupils listen attentively, concentrate well, and enjoy their lessons. They are courteous, polite and welcoming to visitors and respond particularly well when their work is challenging and relevant. They cooperate well with one another and relationships are generally good. On a few occasions, some of the pupils are less attentive to the needs of others as they move around the school.

Quality of provision

The quality of teaching and learning has improved. All of the teaching is at least satisfactory. Much of it is good and some is outstanding. Learning objectives are shared with the pupils and success criteria are used effectively to check the pupils' knowledge and understanding. Relationships are very good. Teachers are benefiting from clear guidance about how to improve their work and are beginning to use assessment more consistently to inform their planning. Marking is good in English. It is becoming more consistent and increasingly evaluative in mathematics, science and other subjects. Pupils' targets are generally challenging and teachers' written comments explain carefully what the pupils need to do next in order to improve their work. In some lessons, the pace of learning was too slow and pupils were not introduced sufficiently to new phrases, vocabulary and texts which could have increased their knowledge and understanding at a faster rate. In other lessons, resources were not always prepared well enough which again slowed the pace of learning.

Leadership and management

Since your appointment as acting headteacher you have introduced a far more rigorous approach to school improvement. You have high expectations and a clear vision for the school's future development. Your leadership is making a positive difference to raising standards and improving teaching in all year groups. You have established a good partnership with the acting deputy headteacher who gives you good support. The senior management team is also developing its role well. Members of the team understand that they are also accountable for the standards achieved by the pupils and they are eager to play a full part in the school's improvement. They appreciate the emphasis on team work that has been established recently and recognise that they need to become more involved in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects.

Arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the school's performance have been improved and strengthened. They are based on an increasingly rigorous analysis of pupils' standards and their progress, particularly in writing and numeracy. Using Key Stage 1 attainment levels, assessment information is checked carefully to identify underachievement and target resources according to need. There is a systematic approach to observing lessons and providing teachers with feedback about their work, although areas for development are not always followed up with sufficient urgency. Strategic planning is improving. You are aware that the school needs to produce an improvement plan, including a self-evaluation of the school's performance in relation to the new inspection framework.

External support

The local authority provides a good level of support to you and the governing body. This was particularly evident during the period between the previous monitoring visit in July 2005 and the time when you took up your post as the acting headteacher. The school has benefited from the good advice provided by literacy and numeracy consultants, the link adviser and a senior adviser for school improvement. This has led to improvements in the quality of teaching and learning.

Main Judgements

The school has made satisfactory progress in removing the causes of its serious weaknesses.

Priorities for further improvement

- Eliminate underachievement, extending the good arrangements for tracking the pupils' progress in writing and numeracy to include reading and science. Ensure that clear links are established between attainment and progress in order to measure the school's success against the levels the pupils should be achieving for their age.

- Establish a more flexible approach to monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching so that areas for development are prioritised, with the most pressing priorities followed up immediately.
- Produce a longer term strategic improvement plan to include a robust self-evaluation of the school's performance.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the chair of governors and the Strategic Director of Learning and Culture for Birmingham.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Watters
Her Majesty's Inspector