

Mrs V Greggs
The Headteacher
The Meadows Primary School
Bristol Road South
Birmingham
B31 2SW

18 December 2006

Dear Mrs Greggs

OFSTED MONITORING OF SCHOOLS WHOSE OVERALL
EFFECTIVENESS HAS BEEN JUDGED SATISFACTORY

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on Thursday 7 December 2006, for the time you gave to our telephone discussions, and for the information which you provided before and during my visit. Please pass on my thanks to the teachers whose lessons were observed and to the pupils who talked to me.

As a result of the inspection in November 2005, the school was asked to:

- improve monitoring and evaluation in order to raise the quality of teaching and standards, particularly in writing
- ensure that targets are consistently challenging, especially for higher attainers, so their progress is uniformly brisk.

Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making satisfactory progress in addressing the issues for improvement.

The monitoring and evaluation of the school's work is satisfactory and no longer inadequate. Self-evaluation procedures are sound. However, many of the tools used for review are in their infancy and have not yet had time to become fully embedded into school life. There has been regular monitoring of teaching and the main strengths and weaknesses in provision have been identified. Evaluation of teaching is not yet systematic in reviewing pupils' progress and making explicit the overall quality of lessons seen. It is, therefore, difficult to measure the overall quality of teaching and its rate of improvement. Governors are supportive but are not yet sufficiently involved in the monitoring and evaluation of provision.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The leadership recognises that the variation in teaching is wide and too much teaching is satisfactory. Action

is being taken to bring about improvement. For example, planning was identified as in need of attention as learning objectives were not always clearly specified and higher attainers were not being sufficiently stretched. Lesson planning is now thorough and detailed although lesson objectives are not yet matched to National Curriculum levels. Work in class is better matched to pupils' needs and capabilities, particularly the higher attainers. In the two lessons observed, the most able Year 2 writers and Year 6 mathematicians were being effectively stretched and were making good progress. Year 6 results in 2006 show increased numbers of pupils gaining the expected Level 4 and higher Level 5 in all core subjects. In writing the improvement was marked. There was a 23% rise in the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4+ and a 19% improvement in the numbers gaining Level 5. The proportion of girls and boys achieving Level 5 in English was above that seen nationally. The rise is a result of better and more focused teaching in Year 6.

Pupils' progress is effectively tracked and data is beginning to inform intervention. Regular work scrutiny and the analysis of test paper answers are helping teachers pinpoint what pupils can and cannot do. Teachers are rightly refocusing on the gaps in learning with positive results. There is no room for complacency as the recent tracking data has identified some classes in Years 3, 4 and 5 where pupils' progress is barely satisfactory. The leadership recognises this and has begun to monitor rigorously planning to raise teacher expectations, call teachers to account for the progress made by pupils in their class, and implement new ways of teaching mathematics and spelling. It is too early to say what impact such initiatives are having on raising standards and teaching quality.

Year 6 targets for 2007 are appropriately challenging. The school will do well to achieve its prediction of 38% pupils achieving Level 5 in English and mathematics, given the higher attainers' current performance. End of year targets in other year groups are realistic. When pupils make better than expected progress more challenging targets are suitably set so their progress is brisk. Individual writing and mathematics targets are precise and helpful in identifying what must be improved. Year 6 pupils are aware of the National Curriculum level they are working at, however, Year 5 pupils are not.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school. I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the chair of governors and the Director of Children's Services for Birmingham.

Yours sincerely

David Rzeznik
Her Majesty's Inspector