

Serco Inspections
Boundary House
2 Wythall Green Way
Middle Lane
Birmingham
West Midlands
B47 6LW

T 0300 123 1231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct T 0121 683 2064
Direct email: siobhan.rogers@serco.com



12 May 2010

Mr J Johnson
Headteacher
Edwards Hall Primary School
Macmurdo Road
Leigh-on-Sea
SS9 5AQ

Dear Mr Johnson

Ofsted monitoring of schools with a notice to improve

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on Tuesday, 11 May 2010 and for the information which you provided during my visit. Please pass on my thanks to the group of parents I met at the start of the day, to the pupils for their help during the inspection, and to your Chair of Governors for taking time to meet me to discuss her view of the school's progress following the last inspection.

There has been a change of headteacher since the last inspection; a new and experienced headteacher joined the school in April 2010. A member of the local authority school improvement team was appointed to the position of deputy headteacher for two terms from January 2010. Governors are currently organising the selection of a new permanent deputy headteacher for September 2010. One teacher from Year 6 left the school in April 2010 and has been replaced temporarily, pending a permanent appointment. Governing body membership and responsibilities have remained the same since the last inspection. The number on roll has fallen to 364.

The local authority has drawn up a post-inspection plan to guide the school's improvement over the 12 months from January 2010. This statement of action was judged fit for purpose and includes clearly focussed objectives for tackling the issues from the inspection. A school improvement partnership board set up by the local authority meets periodically to monitor and evaluate the school's progress. Good support for improvements in teaching and the use of assessment to aid learning has been provided by the local authority through the appointment of the acting deputy headteacher.

As a result of the inspection on 8 December 2009, the school was asked to: improve the rigour and impact of monitoring by leaders and governors, including leaders' monitoring of lessons to bring about improvements in teaching; raise standards by



improving the consistency of assessments, teachers' use of data to match pupils' learning needs, the use of learning objectives in lessons, marking and target setting; ensure behaviour management strategies are used consistently and effectively by all staff.

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 and in raising pupils' achievement.

Pupils' achievement remains satisfactory. Attainment is broadly average and learning and progress continue to be satisfactory. The school's own evaluation confirms the inspection findings from December 2009, indicating that progress is better in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 than in Key Stage 2. Assessment data held by the school show that in January 2010, pupils in Year 2 were in a better position to meet their end of year targets than pupils in Year 6. Since then, the rate of progress has accelerated and further assessments completed at the end of the spring term indicate that pupils in Year 6 are now much closer to meeting their English and mathematics targets. Evidence from observing lessons and looking at pupils' books shows that learning and progress in other Key Stage 2 year groups are satisfactory overall but continue to be too variable. The school acknowledges that pupils need to make consistently better progress throughout Key Stage 2. Work is still required on raising the attainment of boys and on improving the quality of pupils' work and presentation in their books.

Pupils and staff believe that behaviour is better now than at the time of the last inspection. Pupils feel more confident that any unacceptable behaviour will be tackled effectively. A revised behaviour policy and a new system of consequences have been introduced to improve the consistency with which behaviour is managed by staff. The school's records show that incidences of poor behaviour have reduced considerably since the end of the autumn term. A very small number of pupils were given fixed term exclusions in the spring term but none have been excluded since March. Improved supervision arrangements at lunchtime, and at the start and end of the school day, have helped create a more orderly atmosphere around the school. Behaviour in lessons during the monitoring inspection was always satisfactory and sometimes good. Pupils' attitudes, listening skills and concentration levels in some of the classes visited were still not positive enough. There remains scope for improvement in the way in which teachers involve and engage pupils in lessons to ensure they make the most of their learning opportunities.

Teaching has improved since the inspection but remains satisfactory. The school's monitoring records show that there is an increasing number of lessons in which teaching, learning and progress are satisfactory or better. Teachers have received a good deal of support to help improve the quality of, and consistency in, their teaching. Planning in English and mathematics now follows a similar format in all classes. Teachers are more adept at identifying learning objectives and success criteria, and planning activities that match pupils' abilities. Using assessment



effectively to support learning has also been a focus for staff professional development but this is an aspect of teaching that still requires improvement. Leaders agree, and observations during the monitoring inspection confirm, that other weaknesses in teaching remain. For example, there is scope for improving some teachers' use of information and communication technology to support learning and for increasing the level of challenge for more able pupils. Improvements are also required in how teachers assess learning when pupils are working independently and in the deployment of teaching assistants to make learning and progress more effective for the pupils they work with. The overall quality of marking and setting targets to help pupils to improve their work show signs of improvement but inconsistencies remain. Pupils are not entirely clear about how their work is marked or what is expected from them in response.

The systems for monitoring the quality of provision and pupils' achievement have improved markedly since the last inspection. There is a sharper focus on monitoring pupils' attainment and leaders have increased the frequency with which they meet teachers to discuss how well pupils are doing in each class. These meetings are used to analyse rates of progress and to check whether any pupils are falling behind. Currently, much of this information is collated manually and leaders acknowledge that introducing an electronic system would enable leaders and teachers to use the data more efficiently to evaluate the progress made by different groups of pupils. A schedule has been drawn up for monitoring the quality of learning in lessons and teachers have received detailed feedback on the strengths and areas for improvement in their teaching following lesson observations. Leaders have also completed planning and book scrutinies, and recorded points for improvement required in the conditions for learning following learning walks. The information generated from these monitoring activities is reported systematically and used to evaluate the progress made with tackling the key issues from the inspection.

The governing body has undertaken more of its own monitoring and evaluation activities since the inspection. Governors have joined learning walks, attended work scrutiny sessions and established links with staff who lead curriculum areas. They have also met with, and written to, parents to report on the changes that were introduced to improve the management of pupils' behaviour. Another meeting is planned for this term to update parents on other improvements made since the inspection.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Rob McKeown
Her Majesty's Inspector

