

Serco Inspections
Colmore Plaza
20 Colmore Circus
Queensway
Birmingham
B4 6AT

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

Direct T: 0121 679 9169
Direct email: mathew.mitchell@serco.com



6 May 2015

Louise Watkins
Headteacher
Cliff Park Junior School
Orde Avenue
Gorleston
Great Yarmouth
NR31 6SZ

Dear Mrs Watkins

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Cliff Park Junior School

Following my visit to your academy on 5 May 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 academy was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in February 2015. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders, governors, members and trustees are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- embed the practices outlined in the action plan into the school so they are evident in every class and impact on learning outcomes for every pupil.

Evidence

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, the executive headteacher, middle leaders, pupils, governors and trustees. We discussed the actions taken since the last inspection and the school action plan was evaluated. We also undertook an extended learning walk and looked at teaching, planning, pupils' books and the learning environment. We shared school data and tracking systems and discussed the school's approach to assessment without levels and the new curriculum.

Trustees and governors shared the performance management cycle and how this impacts on school improvement.

Context

Since the inspection in February 2015 two new middle leader posts have been created and filled: head of Years 3 and 4 (Lower Key Stage 2) and head of Years 5 and 6 (Upper Key Stage 2.) Two teaching posts have been filled and the successful candidates will start in September 2015. A new interim Chair of the Governing body has been recruited from the existing trustees. Four governor vacancies have allocated applicants but the governing body has not formally agreed their appointments yet. A vacancy remains for a staff governor.

Main findings

The school's action plan is robust and addresses the areas for improvement outlined in the report. There has been limited time for all actions to cascade through to classroom practice for all teaching staff, but pockets of strong teaching have embraced the proposed improvements and are already applying them in their classrooms. The school's action plan is informed and appropriate.

The agreed handwriting model and standards of presentation are shared and are evident in all classrooms, although not yet in all pupils' work. Work books scrutinised showed an improvement in presentation and pupils are able to describe how they are improving the presentation in their books and how they are trying to join their handwriting; they showed me the modelled examples.

Marking and feedback are very structured and have a clear focus on improving learning for all pupils by providing immediate next steps and then allowing pupils time to improve. Pupils were able to describe the literacy process with the purple prompt cards but there are different approaches in each class, and some pupils do not know how to improve. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 felt that their work was challenging enough, while pupils in Years 3 and 4 felt that their work could be harder. Work scrutinised was appropriate to the age of the pupils but there was only limited evidence of additional challenge in some classes. The attainment and progress data indicates that pupils would benefit from more challenging work and this is detailed in the action plan.

Performance data is very closely tracked and senior leaders have a thorough knowledge of pupils' achievements. Current tracking data indicates that the results for 2015 will be better than those for 2014 but are not at the level that the school is content with. Leaders are aware that the improved teaching, strategic interventions and rigorous tracking are enhancing learning and they need to persevere with planned actions and monitor impact regularly. Delivery of the new curriculum and assessment without levels is being thoroughly explored and senior staff, as with the

action plan, are researching options widely before determining the final direction the school should go in.

There is an established structure for senior leadership and an emerging structure for middle leaders. You can describe how the distributed leadership model is being established to ensure that the vision for, and culture of, the school is achieved. You are aware of the need for 'non-negotiable' tasks and styles that are expected for all teachers and teaching assistants. Some staff members are not fully conversant with this principle, but senior and middle leaders are committed to ensuring that expected practice should be evident in every class. As the performance management cycle starts again, leaders were able to describe how expectations are going to be made more explicit in performance targets.

Senior Leaders are aware of the need to be cautious about introducing further changes before others are embedded.

External support

The academy trust recognises the strength is sharing good practice within the group, but has also identified the need to extend experiences beyond the two schools. Cliff Park Junior School works with other local schools and educational organisations, such as the local authority, to select the training opportunities and good practice models they require. This is planned to continue.

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

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Trustees of the academy and the Director of Children's Services for Norfolk.

Yours sincerely

Deborah Pargeter
Associate Inspector

- Appropriate authority - Chair of the Governing Body
- Local authority – including where the school is an academy
- For academies [CausingConcern.SCHOOLS@education.gsi.gov.uk]