

Serco Inspections  
Cedar House  
21 William Street  
Edgbaston  
Birmingham  
B15 1LH

**OFSTED**

T 0300 123 1231

Text Phone: 0161 6188524

enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

**SERCO**

Direct T 0121 683 3888

Direct email: siobhan.rogers@serco.com



27 January 2011

Mr S Adams  
Interim Headteacher  
Lings Primary School  
Hayeswood Road  
Lings  
Northampton  
NN3 8NN

Dear Mr Adams

**Special measures: monitoring inspection of Lings Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 25 January 2011, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in March 2010. The full list of the areas for improvement which were identified during that inspection are set out in the annex to this letter. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – satisfactory

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – good

The school is permitted in the future to appoint one newly qualified teacher for either Key Stage 1 or 2 if it is felt to be appropriate.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be posted on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Northamptonshire.

Yours sincerely

Philip Mann  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in March 2010**

- Close the gap between attainment in English, mathematics and science at Lings Primary School with the national averages by:
  - making sure all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make consistently good or better progress in all lessons to eradicate underachievement
  - increasing the amount of good teaching and ensuring a clear focus on raising expectations and matching the level of work to the abilities of all pupils
  - improving the pace of learning and the active participation by pupils in lessons.
  
- Develop leadership expertise across the school and ensure all contribute to school improvement by:
  - improving the leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage
  - establishing effective monitoring and evaluation practices by all those with leadership and management responsibilities, including the governing body
  - strengthening the governing body so that it is at full complement and has the capacity to fulfil its responsibilities.
  
- Ensure all safeguarding requirements are fulfilled by:
  - completing relevant risk assessments for internal school activities
  - improving relationships between the facilities management company and the leaders of the school so that systems and practice can be agreed
  - ensuring formal records are kept for incidents of racist behaviour.
  
- Improve attendance to at least average levels with a focus on supporting the few families who persistently do not send their children to school.

## **Special measures: monitoring of Lings Primary School**

### **Report from the second monitoring inspection on 25 January 2011**

#### **Evidence**

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the interim headteacher, other school leaders, teachers, administration staff, the Vice-Chair of the Governing Body, representatives from the local authority, and talked to pupils and looked at their work.

#### **Context**

Staffing has remained stable since the previous visit and there is now a full complement of governors.

#### **Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning**

Analysis of the school's own performance data and observations in lessons confirm that gaps in the achievement of different groups of pupils in English and mathematics are narrowing quickly. This is because teaching has improved with much being consistently good or better across Key Stage 1 and 2. Pupils in all classes are working at age related expectations because of improvements made to lesson planning. All pupils are achieving well in literacy skills because of a strong focus now placed on using drama to support pupils' writing development. Scrutiny of pupils' writing confirms that all pupils are increasing their range of vocabulary by making good use of key words 'posted' on vibrant 'learning walls' within their classrooms. For instance, a pupil in Year 2 confidently located the word 'isolated' ready for inclusion in her story to describe a specific character and a boy in Year 4 used the word 'elfin' to describe a small person. Boys in all classes are developing a love of literature by becoming enthralled about the characters in stories told, often enacted out by their teacher. More able pupils find work challenging, because work is now pitched more accurately at their level of ability. Teachers make effective use of sessions for talk between pupils with opportunities for them assess each other's work within lessons to engage pupils fully in their learning. Guided group work and the effective use of support staff ensure pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make consistently good progress. However, previous legacies of underachievement have yet to be fully eradicated to ensure average standards are attained at the end of Key Stage 2.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on the areas for improvement:

- close the gap between attainment in English, mathematics and science at Lings Primary School with the national averages – satisfactory

#### **Other relevant pupil outcomes**

Pupils are responding well in all classes to the wide range of interesting learning activities planned effectively for them. Pupils clearly find learning fun and enjoy coming to school. Analysis of the latest data available confirms that the improvements being made in pupils' attendance have been sustained at average levels. The number of persistent absentees continues to reduce.

Pupils' attitudes towards learning are increasingly more positive. Their contribution to the school community grows in strength through their inclusion in school improvement activity. For example, with the support of the teachers, the school council has implemented a 'talk partner' charter to improve the quality of communication between pupils in lessons. Work is now much neater in pupils' books because the school council identifies the class that has made the most improvement each week by looking at samples of their classmates' work. Pupils persevere with their tasks in all lessons. Even those who exhibit behavioural difficulties respond positively to the interesting tasks planned for them and to opportunities to work in small groups. All pupils are far more attentive in lessons because teachers utilise a greater range of strategies and resources to engage pupils fully in learning activities. For instance, pupils state that the digital visualisers being used by teachers in lessons are making a big difference to their own confidence and level of understanding about the topics being taught.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on the areas for improvement:

- improve attendance to at least average levels with a focus on supporting the few families who persistently do not send their children to school – good

### **The effectiveness of provision**

The quality of teaching and learning across both Key Stage 1 and 2 has improved considerably. Greater levels of consistency in both planning and the assessment of pupils' progress facilitate good achievement. As a result, tasks are pitched at the correct level in all classes. All teaching observed in these key stages during the inspection visit was good or better. Lessons now move along at a brisk pace. Learning intentions for each lesson are clear for pupils to understand and success criteria shared with the pupils provide them with a clear understanding of what is expected of them. All teachers in these key stages make good use of information and communication technology to support their teaching. For instance, a well designed game on the interactive whiteboard supported the reinforcement of a new mathematical skill to pupils in Year 3 and a digital visualiser was used regularly in a Year 2 literacy lesson to facilitate peer assessment and pupils' progress. All teachers mark pupils' writing in detail. Comments provide clear guidance to pupils about what they have achieved, set mini targets for further improvement in the short term and suggestions about how these might be achieved. Pupils respond well to this by entering into a written conversation with their teacher. However, discussions with

pupils suggest that not all are clear about what they need to do next to improve in English and mathematics in the medium term.

The introduction of new resources to the outdoor area for Reception children has resulted in a learning environment more consistent with the guidance for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Suitably experienced support staff ensure that the needs of children are being appropriately met. However, despite these improvements to the learning environment, teaching remains only satisfactory and consequently these children are still making slow progress from very low starting points.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on the areas for improvement:

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning to accelerate progress and raise standards in English, mathematics and science - good
- Use assessment information more effectively to pitch work accurately at the correct level for all pupils - good

### **The effectiveness of leadership and management**

The interim headteacher has instilled a clear sense of purpose and teamwork amongst the staff to drive forward the improvements needed to raise standards. This sense of purpose is now clearly demonstrated by middle managers, who have worked hard to improve provision in their respective areas of responsibility. All have led specific staff training events and presented reports to governors since the last visit. The monitoring of teaching and learning is productive because it actively engages all staff with specific responsibilities and fully complements regular and perceptive monitoring of teaching and learning by the interim headteacher. Findings from this monitoring are analysed with rigour and precision to provide staff and governors with a comprehensive overview of the strengths and areas for further development of teaching. This is then used to improve the quality of pupils' learning experiences further. Inadequate practice is tackled robustly and as a result, the consistency of teaching has improved and pupils make good progress in lessons.

Governors continue to play a greater role in overseeing improvement by being actively involved in monitoring the school's work and asking challenging questions of school leadership. This has given them the necessary insight into what is being undertaken and what still needs to be achieved in order to sustain further improvement. Safeguarding procedures are robust and a positive working relationship between the site management company and the school ensures that risk assessment procedures are being followed well.

Progress since the last monitoring inspection on the areas for improvement:

- Strengthen the role of subjects leaders in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning to facilitate pupils' achievement and improvements in provision - good

- Ensure all safeguarding requirements are fulfilled – good

### **External support**

The local authority continues to provide effective levels of support to the school. Good progress is being made on the priorities for improvement within the action plan. The school has benefited considerably from good quality training and support from local authority advisers. For instance, carefully planned support for middle managers has enhanced their leadership skills and strengthened the school's ability to sustain future improvement.

### **Priorities for further improvement**

- Ensure that the improvements made in the quality of teaching and learning are fully consolidated and all pupils continue to make good or better progress.
- Ensure pupils clearly understand what they need to do next to improve in English and mathematics.
- Ensure that the pace of improvement in the Reception class fully matches the rate of improvement in other classes.