

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

Serco E tim.ogbourn@serco.com
Direct T 0121 683 3888



12 May 2011

Miss Melanie Lawson
Headteacher
Ladywood Primary School
Oliver Road
Ilkeston
DE7 4NH

Dear Miss Lawson

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Ladywood Primary School

Following my visit with Mary Hughes, additional inspector, to your school on 10 and 11 May 2011, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures in December 2010. The monitoring inspection report is attached and the main judgements are set out below.

Progress since being subject to special measures – **satisfactory**.

Newly qualified teachers may be appointed.

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 governors and the Director of Children's Services for Derbyshire.

Yours sincerely

Dorothy Bathgate
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in December 2010

- Raise attainment and accelerate pupils' progress, especially in mathematics, by:
 - ensuring that teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - developing teachers' skills in using assessment to plan lessons to guide pupils' learning more effectively
 - ensuring teachers acquire a wider range of techniques to promote pupils' active engagement in their learning
 - ensuring senior leaders monitor teaching and learning more frequently and rigorously.

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that the leadership roles of key senior leaders are focused more sharply on raising pupils' attainment and accelerating their progress
 - strengthening strategic planning to provide a clear steer for staff to develop provision
 - ensuring that all actions taken are monitored, evaluated and reviewed robustly by the senior leadership team
 - developing the monitoring and evaluation role of the governing body to enable its members to hold the school's leaders more effectively to account.

Special measures: monitoring of Ladywood Primary School

Report from the first monitoring inspection on 10 and 11 May 2011

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, including eight lessons. They scrutinised documents and conducted a scrutiny of pupils' work in English and mathematics. Inspectors met with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, phase leaders, groups of pupils, representatives from the governing body, including the Chair of the Governing Body and the local authority (LA) School Improvement Partner.

Context

Since the inspection in December 2010 there have been no significant contextual changes. One member of staff remains on long-term absence.

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

Inspection evidence shows that overall attainment for pupils at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is broadly average. The standard of work seen in lessons in mathematics indicates significant improvement from the time of the previous inspection. The school's data confirms this and indicates an emerging trend of improvement. However, in lessons observed jointly with senior leaders, some pupils in Key Stage 2 continue to make slower progress than younger pupils. This is directly linked to the quality of teaching seen in these classes. Where teaching was better, expectations were high and pupils were appropriately challenged and motivated. In less effective lessons, activities were pitched too high or too low for pupils, learning lacked purpose and the pace of learning was slow. Consequently, some pupils did not make the progress of which they were capable.

Progress since the last Section 5 inspection on the areas for improvement:

- raise attainment and accelerate pupils' progress, especially in mathematics – **satisfactory**.

The effectiveness of provision

The quality of teaching is strengthening but remains variable throughout the school. A range of teaching was observed throughout the inspection and included some good lessons. There is stability in the staffing complement and, through the welcome support, guidance and training from LA consultants and advisers, teachers' confidence is improving. This is particularly noticeable in the teaching of mathematics. However, the school recognises that there is more to do to ensure that all teachers make use of precise teaching methods to support and guide pupils to

enable them to make the good progress of which they are capable. Planning is generally appropriate but lacks consistency of format throughout the school. Teachers' use of questioning techniques, as well as the opportunities they provide for pupils to think and talk things through with a partner, often lack the precision required to gain good progress. Too often, brief answers are accepted and there are missed opportunities to challenge pupils further. In the better lessons, expectations are more appropriate and pupils enjoy practical activities which are relevant and motivate them to learn. Teaching assistants are generally well deployed in supporting and guiding pupils throughout the whole of a lesson. Although there is evidence of improvements in teaching since the last inspection, these are not yet impacting sufficiently in securing more rapid progress for all pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2. In all lessons, pupils' behaviour was good and pupils displayed extremely positive attitudes to learning.

All staff have received training on the assessment of pupils' learning during a lesson. There is some evidence of this being used effectively through the use of 'show me' and 'peer assessment' strategies but this practice has not had enough time to become established throughout the school. Pupils know what they are expected to learn because most teachers make this clear at the start of the lesson. There is still scope to make the 'steps for success' more clearly understood by all groups of pupils. Pupils are participating more in assessing their own and classmates' work. Consequently, they feel more involved in their learning, and older pupils talk confidently about their targets. Assessment procedures are more rigorous. Pupils are assessed each half term and this information is evaluated by senior leaders. As a result, teachers are becoming more aware of the levels at which pupils are working and support is being targeted at those who are falling behind. The school recognises that there is an opportunity for this information to be used to identify pupils who can make quicker progress and plan for their specific needs. The recently reviewed marking policy is beginning to make an effective contribution to improving progress and raising attainment. However, teachers' written comments do not always provide pupils with clear pointers for improvement which are precisely focused upon what is needed to improve.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Since the previous inspection, senior leaders and the governing body have united in their determination to move the school forward and to raise standards and achievement for all pupils at Ladywood. In order to achieve this, they have strengthened procedures for reviewing and monitoring the school's work. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and appreciates what steps are required to secure improvements. She leads with enthusiasm and energy which is well channelled into 'getting things done'. The drive for improvement is shared by all staff and there is a renewed sense of purpose about the school. The capacity of leadership has been strengthened through a rigorous review of the roles and responsibilities of senior leadership. In particular, the roles of phase leaders are now more sharply focused on improving literacy and numeracy. Phase leaders have begun to undertake scrutiny of planning and hold regular data dialogue meetings

with staff. They are scheduled to undertake training in carrying out lesson observations in order to develop these roles further. Although senior leaders have acted decisively to bring about improvements, there has not been enough time for the effectiveness of these to have impacted on securing more rapid progress for pupils and raising attainment.

Senior leaders have worked in partnership with the LA to devise a detailed plan of action. This is currently providing a clear direction for the school with sharp success criteria. However, senior leaders recognise the need to devise a more strategic school improvement plan which will drive the school forward from September 2011.

The governing body's response to the weaknesses outlined in the inspection report has been swift. The committee structure has been revised with clear roles and responsibilities established. All governors visit school regularly and they are beginning to develop a clearer understanding of their role as a critical friend in holding the school to account.

Progress since the last Section 5 inspection:

- Improve the quality of leadership and management – **satisfactory**.

External support

The LA's statement of action correctly identifies the priorities required for school improvement. An extensive package of training and support has been arranged. This has included training for all staff in aspects of classroom practice, as well as working with the governing body to analyse data about the school compared to the national picture. The LA's original statement of action required some amendments and now meets requirements. Action plans clearly state when monitoring of action is to take place. The school has welcomed the good support it is receiving from the LA and, in particular, from the School Improvement Partner.

Priorities for further improvement

Priorities remain those identified at the time of the last inspection.