

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



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Mr James Pearce  
Lodge Primary School  
Oak Lane  
West Bromwich  
B70 8PN

Dear Mr Pearce

### **Special measures: monitoring inspection of Lodge Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 8–9 June 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 third monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in May 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 – good.

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – good.

Newly qualified teachers (NQT) may be appointed subject to the following conditions. The school must involve the local authority in the appointment process. The NQT should be mentored in school by a teacher of proven high quality. All NQT entitlements must be met in full. Appropriate internal and external development, support and induction must be provided.

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 Sandwell.

Yours sincerely

Paul Weston  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

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

- Raise levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics and accelerate pupils' learning and progress across all three key stages by:
  - setting a clear direction for the school that focuses on improving pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching by strengthening the role of all leaders and holding staff to account for pupils' progress
  - ensuring that the tracking of pupils' progress is up to date and the information is used effectively to address underachievement
  - ensuring that programmes to raise attainment in phonics and writing are consistently and securely implemented by all staff
  - increasing pupils' levels of attendance.
  
- Improve the quality of teaching across all three key stages by:
  - ensuring that lesson planning makes effective use of assessment information to match activities accurately to pupils' abilities and that teachers have high expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving
  - identifying, within lessons, when pupils are ready for the next steps in their learning
  - responding to pupils' work and informing them of the actions they need to take to improve and achieve their learning targets
  - setting clear expectations of what is required in lessons and establishing robust systems to check that all staff are following these guidelines.
  
- To improve the effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement, leaders and managers should:
  - ensure that all staff engage fully with the school's drive for further improvement
  - be more systematic in following up weaknesses in teaching, learning and assessment within challenging timescales
  - in all strategic planning, add specific, quantifiable and timed targets so that progress towards them is measurable and can be reported accurately.

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

### **Report from the third monitoring inspection on 8–9 June 2011**

#### **Evidence**

The inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, senior leadership team, staff, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body, a representative from the local authority and a held a telephone conversation with the headteacher from the partner school.

#### **Context**

Since the beginning of the academic year, the number of pupils on roll has increased to 329. As a consequence, the school will be organised into 13 classes from September 2011. An experienced teacher has been recruited and will commence her teaching duties at the start of the new academic year. One of the assistant headteachers remains absent from school and her duties continue to be shared among the senior leadership team.

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

Pupils' achievement is strengthening as a result of improvements in the quality of teaching and learning, and the increasingly effective use of assessments by teachers to match work to pupils' abilities. The thorough analysis of the data from assessments and tests has given all staff a detailed picture of the impact of their teaching on pupils' progress and helped set clear expectations for further improvement. Over the last school year, pupils' progress has accelerated. Nevertheless, there are inconsistencies between some year groups and subjects which reflect variation in the quality of teaching. Some year groups have moved on markedly in reading, writing and mathematics. In others, learning is more uneven.

Teacher assessment at the end of Year 6 for English and mathematics show that attainment, although significantly improved this year, remains lower than that expected for pupils of a similar age. However, the percentage of pupils achieving at the higher level has increased appreciably to be broadly in line with national outcomes. Attainment at the end of Year 2 has also shown a marked improvement compared with the previous year, with increased numbers achieving at both the expected and higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics. Throughout the school, writing remains the weakest subject. Appropriate strategies have been implemented to remedy this, such as increasing opportunities to write at length in other subjects, but the legacy of past underachievement means that it will require more time for the impact of these to show through in terms of raised attainment.

School leaders are giving careful thought to how best tailor support for those pupils with special educational needs and/or learning difficulties, and those in the early stages of learning English, to enable them to catch up. A good range of strategies have recently been implemented, such as Wave 3 literacy and numeracy interventions. As a result, the majority of pupils with special educational needs and/or learning difficulties and those in the early stages of learning English are making satisfactory progress. Strategies are not consistently followed which means that pupils are not making the rates of progress required to close the gap with their peers.

Pupils show interest in their work and have good attitudes to learning. They want to come to school, and this is shown by their increased attendance. This is now at an average of 94.9%. Pupils particularly enjoy practical and investigative activities, such as in Year 2, where they were designing and making healthy sandwiches for their trip to the seaside. In Year 6, pupils were fully engrossed in designing, making and evaluating animal pens following their visit to Chester Zoo. In activities, pupils are increasingly using their skills and applying what they know. For example, children in the Reception Year are drawing on their growing awareness of letters, sounds and key words to read and write independently.

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

- raise levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics and accelerate pupils' learning and progress across all three key stages – good.

### **Other relevant pupil outcomes**

Pupils behave well in and around the school, and they are eager to learn. They support each other in lessons and play cooperatively in the playground. Pupils say they feel safe in school and that any bullying is usually addressed effectively by the staff. They know how to keep safe and healthy and they make a positive contribution to the community, for example as 'playground buddies'. They are developing appropriate literacy, numeracy and social skills to support their future education.

### **The effectiveness of provision**

The provision is strengthening. Although good strides have been made in improving the quality of teaching, there is still some way to go to ensure learning is good in every lesson. Teachers' planning is usually detailed, giving a clear structure, clear learning intentions and clearly defined activities for pupils of different abilities. Behaviour management strategies are applied regularly. There are opportunities to work in pairs and groups, and there are more chances for pupils to check their work with a partner. Teaching assistants continue to be more involved in supporting and guiding pupils during the lesson.

On occasion, teachers provide work that is not sufficiently challenging for pupils or they do not expect enough of them. Sometimes, teachers set work that is too difficult. In these lessons, pupils mark time and do not make the progress of which they are capable. Assessment has improved in consistency since the last visit. The Assessing Pupil Progress process of assessment has been embraced and embedded by staff in Key Stage 2. Teachers have successfully improved the quality of questioning to discuss pupils' thinking and check on pupils' understanding. Marking of work in other subjects has now risen to the standard found in English and mathematics, and pupils are now being provided with time to respond to teachers' comments.

There is a purposeful and settled air to the school, with pupils excited by many of the themes and practical activities in lessons. There are signs that teachers' expectations are higher and pupils are rising to them. For instance, pupils' work in their books since March shows an improvement in both quality and quantity. Opportunities to write at length and in a range of styles, such as recounts and persuasive letters, have increased in subjects such as science and topic work. Handwriting shows positive signs of improvement because teachers have higher expectations and pupils take a greater pride in their work. However, more work is required to ensure that pupils' presentation, punctuation and spelling skills are consolidated and extended. Displays in corridors and classrooms support and celebrate pupils' learning.

Clear and effective systems and structures have been established to support inclusion. A good start has been made by Learning Support Practitioners (LSPs) to implement these, but monitoring has shown that there remain some inconsistencies in their approach. LSPs and teachers are being held much more accountable for rates of progress being made by pupils with special educational needs and/or learning difficulties and those in the early stages of learning English. Pupils are now being identified and supported at a much earlier stage. Productive links have been established with the local authority inclusion support team. Links with parents and carers are also being developed to increase their understanding of how they can support their children at home. Attendance has improved through a good range of rewards, reminders and sanctions. The school has met or exceeded its target of 94.7% in every week but two this calendar year.

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

- improve the quality of teaching across all three key stages – good.

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

The headteacher, with good support from the senior leadership team, has provided the necessary steer for the school and motivated the staff team. Together, they are continuing to contribute well to the direction of the school. They have prioritised

effectively, with a strong drive to improve teaching and learning and commitment to improving achievement. Teachers are being held to account through regular pupil-progress meetings which are leading to improved progress for all pupils. All staff remain committed to school improvement. Professional pride is apparent in the realisation of the positive difference their work is making to what the school provides. The local authority has judged appropriately that the senior leadership team is now in a position to sustain improvements with reduced support.

Senior leaders have developed effectively the monitoring and evaluation skills of the leaders of English, mathematics and inclusion. These are successfully promoting further improvements in teaching and learning. However, other subject leaders have not had the opportunity to evaluate regularly teachers' planning and pupils' books, or to monitor lessons. They are now ready to take responsibility for evaluating the impact of teaching on learning in their subject and to pinpoint where further developments are needed. The governing body is making effective progress in understanding its role and is beginning to challenge the school. It has started work on developing a clear and agreed programme for monitoring and evaluation. This needs to be introduced so that it can hold school leaders to account for standards and quality.

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

- improve the effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement, leaders and managers – good.

### **External support**

The support from the School Improvement Partner, consultants and partnership school has been well targeted and effective. Their work has been well received and has contributed well towards the improvements made by the school.

### **Priorities for further improvement**

- Ensure the LSPs consistently implement the recently introduced systems and structures and deliver tailored support for those pupils identified with special educational needs and/or learning difficulties, and those in the early stages of learning English, in order increase rates of progress.
- Increase opportunities for subject leaders other than those for English and mathematics to monitor and evaluate their subject and plan to address those areas identified for further improvement.
- Ensure the governing body establishes an agreed process for monitoring and evaluation in order to hold the school to account for standards and quality.