

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

Direct T 0121 679 9154  
Direct email: aidan.dunne@serco.com



26 March 2015

Barbara Carter  
Headteacher  
Rood End Primary School  
Rood End Road  
Oldbury  
B68 8SQ

Dear Ms Carter

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Rood End Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 24–25 March 2015, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the third monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in January 2014. The full list of the areas for improvement which were identified during that inspection is set out in the annex to this letter. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time:

The school is making reasonable progress towards the removal of special measures.

The school may appoint one newly qualified teacher before the next monitoring inspection, who should be supported by a teacher whose teaching is of consistently good quality.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be published 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

Rachel Howie  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

The letter should be copied to the following:

- Appropriate authority - Chair of the Governing Body/Interim Executive Board
- Local authority – (including where a school is an academy)
- The Secretary of State
- The lead and team inspectors.

## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in January 2014.**

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better in order to raise pupils' achievement by:
  - making sure that all teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve
  - placing an increased emphasis on improving pupils' skills in English and mathematics and giving pupils more opportunity to apply these skills across different subjects
  - using assessment information to set work at the right level of difficulty to challenge different ability groups, so that learning moves at a faster pace
  - improving the teaching of phonics so that pupils learn to read well and are able to apply their skills to developing their spelling and writing.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
  - checking frequently and rigorously that all pupils are making good progress in all subjects, and making sure that teachers are challenged about underperformance in their class
  - ensuring that systems for managing teachers' performance are robust and that staff are made accountable for meeting challenging performance targets relating to pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics
  - including clear measures of success in the school's improvement plans to help leaders and governors evaluate how well teaching is improving and how much progress pupils are making
  - identifying more effective measures to tackle persistent absence and improve attendance to at least the national average
  - ensuring that governors have the expertise to hold the school rigorously to account.

Ofsted has made recommendations to the authority responsible for the school on governance. This will include an external review of governance.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

## **Report on the third monitoring inspection on 24-25 March 2015**

### **Evidence**

The inspector observed the school's work and scrutinised a range of documents. Two of the lessons observed during the monitoring inspection were joint observations with the deputy headteacher. In addition to this, the inspector met the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, four representatives from the governing body and a local authority representative. The inspector also spoke to groups of pupils and talked to some parents at the beginning of the school day.

### **Context**

Since the previous monitoring inspection, one Year 3 teacher has left the school and one teacher is on extended sick leave. A second deputy headteacher (who was previously the assistant headteacher) has been appointed, and a Year 6 teacher has been appointed to the post of assistant headteacher. Two teaching assistants have been appointed, as well as a full-time educational welfare officer and a pupil premium manager. A new teacher governor has been elected and a previously co-opted governor has become a full member of the governing body.

### **Achievement of pupils at the school**

Achievement is improving. Evidence, from school tracking information and from work in pupils' books, shows that pupils currently in Year 6 are achieving better than their classmates were at this time last year. This is because outstanding teaching in Year 6 is helping pupils to rapidly make up previous lost ground, particularly in reading and mathematics. The proportion of Year 6 pupils on track to reach expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of the year is closer to the national average than in previous years, although results may yet remain below this measure. Particularly good progress is being made in reading. Results by the end of Year 2 are also on track to improve; however, they may also remain below the national average.

Progress across Key Stage 2 varies too much between classes and between subjects. In some classes, where teaching is effective, pupils are making faster progress and are beginning to make up for previously inadequate teaching. However, where teaching requires improvement, progress is slower and pupils are not catching up with their peers in other schools. This means that teachers in Year 6 have much

ground to make up to ensure that pupils are well prepared to start secondary school. A priority for the school is to accelerate progress in Years 3, 4 and 5. Progress in Key Stage 1 is more consistent and an increasing proportion of pupils are making good progress. Progress in writing is slower across the school than that seen in reading and mathematics.

As a result of effective and consistent phonics (the sounds letters make) teaching, pupils' progress in reading is improving. Targeted support is helping pupils who have fallen behind to catch up with their classmates. An increasing proportion of pupils are on track to meet the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check.

Pupils start the Nursery and Reception class unable to complete many of the tasks and activities typical of children of their age. For example, few are able to follow simple instructions, speak in full sentences and communicate their needs, or pretend and use their imagination. As a result of effective teaching and a stimulating environment in the early years, children are making good gains in their learning from these low starting points.

The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is too variable. Some pupils are making much more progress than would be expected, whereas others are making very little. As with other pupils, progress in writing is the weaker area.

### **The quality of teaching**

Improvements are evident in the quality of teaching. Pupils are making good gains in their learning in the early years and Key Stage 1. However, in Key Stage 2 the quality of teaching is too variable to enable pupils to make the progress that is needed for them to catch up to what is expected for their age. Some good and outstanding teaching is evident, but achieving consistency of this quality across the key stage remains a high priority for the school.

Progress in writing is too slow. Lower-ability pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2, are not being provided with, or directed to resources to help them to become independent when they write. For example, many classrooms have a good range of prompts on display but not all teachers are directing pupils to use those that can support their learning. In addition, the marking and feedback that are provided for the most-able pupils are not stretching them sufficiently to use their abilities to the full.

The teaching of phonics remains strong. Additional resources have been purchased and this has resulted in groups of pupils who are taught outside the classroom having access to information that supports their learning.

Pupils' workbooks show that there are regular opportunities for them to apply their mathematical skills to solving problems. These opportunities are helping to broaden

their understanding of calculation. There are too few opportunities for children to develop their logic and reasoning skills. New practice in teaching and learning is ensuring that pupils are able to move on to new learning within lessons more quickly. In addition, learning tests are enabling teachers to plan challenging work at the right level for different abilities and measure how much progress pupils make. Not all teachers have fully adopted these new initiatives.

Teachers have been provided with additional training on how to mark pupils' work effectively. Pupils' workbooks show that teachers are consistently correcting spellings and are providing pupils with advice about their standard of writing in a range of subjects. Where marking is used most effectively it helps pupils to make progress. The best practice provides pupils with helpful information on how to improve or what to do next; time is given for pupils to respond and then the teacher checks the improved, repeated or new work. Some teachers have high expectations of the presentation of pupils' work. In these classes, the pupils respond and take care with their work. Where expectations are lower or vary too much pupils do not do their best and some work is scruffy and poorly presented.

Where teaching is most effective, teachers demonstrate to pupils how to complete a task, or show them a good example of what they are aiming to do. These teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and plan a challenging sequence of learning activities in lessons to ensure pupils are moved on at the right pace.

The teaching in the early years is helping children, particularly those of the lowest ability, to make good gains in their learning. A wide range of interesting and fun activities is provided for children to choose from. Adults make good contributions to play activities to help children to develop their skills. However, some of the activities that are available do not provide enough opportunities for the most-able children to show what they know or can do. In addition, the outdoor area, while encouraging physical and creative development, does not provide enough opportunities for children to practise their mathematical and writing skills.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and want to learn new things. Evidence from the inspector's visits to lessons confirmed pupils' positive attitudes. They say that disturbances to lessons are rare. Relationships between pupils and adults are warm, caring and positive and pupils are quick to follow the instructions they are given. Pupils who are new to the school are settled in quickly.

Pupils are supervised well around school and during playtimes. Accidents in the playground are dealt with swiftly and appropriately and are recorded in detail. Pupils who have additional medical needs are cared for well. Parents who spoke to the inspector confirmed that their children are safe in school. In the playground, pupils get along well together and say that the new equipment that has been installed is making playtimes more fun. All pupils who spoke with the inspector said that the

school is a safe place and that most pupils behave well. However, some said that some older pupils could 'sometimes be silly'. As at the last monitoring inspection, pupils explain that bullying is not an issue that worries them. If it did happen they are confident that adults would take their concerns very seriously and deal with them.

Attendance continues to improve, although it remains below the national average for primary schools. The systems to record, follow up and analyse attendance are very thorough. Appropriate action is taken if pupils are persistently absent. A system of tracking pupils who are regularly late for school is now in place. Contact is made with parents to discuss their children's punctuality. As a result of the first round of contacts made with parents, punctuality for almost all of the identified pupils has improved.

### **The quality of leadership in and management of the school**

The headteacher is well supported by the two deputy headteachers and they are a cohesive team. They have a precise view of what needs to improve in order for the school to be removed from special measures. Their judgements about the quality of teaching are now more accurate because a wider range of evidence is taken into consideration before a judgement is made. They are providing an appropriate range of training and support for staff and are applying effective systems to measure the improvements resulting from their actions. Senior leaders use effective and rigorous systems to record the checks they make on pupils' progress and the advice and training that teachers are provided with. Senior leaders are reflective and adapt their practice in response to their findings or to advice received.

Frequent checks continue to be made on the quality of teaching. The senior leaders have become more rigorous in the way in which they scrutinise pupils' books to measure progress. Teachers continue to benefit from opportunities to observe good practice and from coaching from senior leaders. Not all teachers are responding to this support as readily as others. Some teachers do not yet fully apply newly introduced policies and procedures and, as a result, weaknesses in practice remain.

Middle leaders are provided with a range of helpful support to enable them to become more effective in their role. Training courses and coaching from external consultants and senior leaders are helping them to gain an accurate picture of their areas of responsibility. They have a clear view of the actions they intend to take in order to ensure provision in their areas of responsibility improves.

Governance continues to improve. This is because governors are committed to increasing their knowledge and understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They visit school regularly to attend meetings with the local authority and the senior leaders. They undertake their own monitoring visits. Governors have allocated responsibilities between themselves, and this arrangement is helping them to gain an accurate picture of individual areas of school life. Visits to school are increasingly

focused on improvement priorities. Reports that are written following these visits provide other governors with useful information. Governors have an accurate view of the quality of teaching. The headteacher provides them with comprehensive reports and governors are asking more challenging questions about the information they receive. They are knowledgeable about how much progress is being made by pupils and can pinpoint where improvements need to be made. They are not as knowledgeable as they should be about how the end-of-year results for Year 6 and Year 2 pupils are predicted to compare to the national average and to the school's performance in 2014.

### **External support**

The local authority adviser continues to provide a good level of challenge and support for this school. There is a productive, professional, working relationship between the adviser and the school's leaders and governors. The findings from the adviser's recent visits to the school mirror the findings of this inspection. The reports that are provided by the adviser pinpoint good practice and identify where further improvement is necessary.