

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 9169  
**Direct email:** mathew.mitchell@serco.com



16 April 2015

Jayne Young  
Headteacher  
Northlands Junior School  
Winifred Road  
Pitsea  
Basildon  
SS13 3JQ

Dear Mrs Young

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Northlands Junior School**

Following my visit to your school on 15 April 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 school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in January 2015. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching in all classes by recognising good practice in specific lessons and replicating it across the entire school; thus providing consistently good target setting, planning, lesson delivery, feedback and marking.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, I met with you and other senior leaders, teachers, the inclusion manager, a member of the governing body and two representatives from the Basildon Excellence Panel (BEP) to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I evaluated the school improvement plan and school self-evaluation, as well as a number of supporting documents detailing progress made since the

inspection in January. We visited the majority of classrooms and I scrutinised teachers' planning, pupils' work books, and I spoke to pupils and listened to two readers.

## **Context**

Since the last inspection there have been a number of staff changes. An additional teacher has been employed, using funding allocated for disadvantaged pupils, to support attainment and progress in Year 6. A cover teacher has been employed during a substantive teacher's maternity leave. The planned amalgamation with the adjoining infant school is progressing and is on schedule for the closure of the junior school at the end of August 2015 with the new Northlands Primary School opening in September 2015.

## **Main findings**

You and your senior team have an accurate picture of the actions needed to improve outcomes for pupils at the school, based on the findings of the previous inspection. These are reflected clearly in the school improvement plan and Ofsted action plan and are monitored and reviewed rigorously by governors, BEP and yourselves. There is a schedule for tracking progress, and current actions and outcomes indicate that the school is keeping to the planned timescales. The school is aware that pupils must achieve rates of progress in English and mathematics that match those seen nationally.

The quality of teaching and subsequent improvement in standards are being addressed through regular monitoring of books, teaching, planning and pupil attainment in pupil progress meetings. As a result of support from the senior leadership team, teachers use data and prior learning to plan and deliver lessons specifically meeting pupils' needs. The result of this is improved academic achievement in all subjects. There are clear strengths in the quality of teaching in upper Key Stage 2 but teaching is not as strong in Years 3 and 4. It is imperative that this stronger practice is expected of all teachers in all year groups.

Standards in reading are rising as a result of improved resourcing, regular monitoring of the quality of reading lessons and training in group reading. The school is aware that pupils need to continue to develop a pleasure in reading and improvements in the broader provision such as use of the library, literacy-based enrichment activities, reading competitions and the continued use of information and communication technology to enhance pupils' access to texts are scheduled.

Marking and feedback are having a positive impact on pupils' achievements in most year groups. Pupils respond to teachers' comments and there are established class routines to ensure that this happens regularly throughout the week. The senior leadership team is aware that marking is not as strong in Year 3 and is adapting the

school's marking and feedback policy to better meet the learning needs of this year group.

### **External support**

The school is accessing comprehensive support from the Basildon Excellence Panel (BEP) and this includes on-going training opportunities, network groups, weekly support from a BEP consultant and direct support from the Chair of the BEP. The local authority is supplementing the BEP support with training and pupil resources and additional broader support. It is anticipated that the local teaching school will provide additional support to the school if required.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Essex and Sir Mike Tomlinson CBE, Chair of the Basildon Excellence Panel.

Yours sincerely

Deborah Pargeter  
**Associate Inspector**

The letter should be copied to the following:

- Appropriate authority - Chair of the Governing Body/Interim Executive Board
- Local authority – including where the school is an academy
- Contractor providing support services on behalf of the local authority - where appropriate
- The person or body responsible for appointing foundation governors if the school has a foundation