

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



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Tony Ahmet
Winterbourne Nursery and Infants' School
Winterbourne Road
Thornton Heath
Surrey
CR7 7QT

Dear Mr Ahmet

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Winterbourne Nursery and Infants' School

Following my visit to your school on 10 June 2016, 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 November 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 last section 5 inspection in order to become a good school.

The school should take further action to:

- clearly identify in the school's action plan the role governors will play in evaluating the impact of actions taken
- review how the school records and tracks pupils' progress and outcomes, so that leaders can be sure that measures of the proportions of pupils meeting the targets set are accurate.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with you, other senior leaders, the inclusion, mathematics and literacy leaders and the year-group leaders to discuss actions taken since the last inspection. I undertook a learning walk with you and two other senior leaders and we visited Year 1, Year 2 and the Reception outdoor and indoor learning areas. I met with the chair of the governing body, a

representative of the local authority and spoke informally with pupils and staff during the lunch break. I also looked at work in pupils' books. I evaluated the school's improvement plan and other documentation, including year-group leaders' action plans, minutes from governing body meetings and the school's most recent records of how well pupils are progressing and their outcomes. I also met with the school business manager to review records relating to keeping children safe.

Context

At the previous inspection, the school had expanded to take an additional 'bulge' class in Year 1. At Easter, due to low pupil numbers and the commencement of maternity leave for one of the Year 1 class teachers, a decision was made to incorporate these pupils into the original Year 1 classes.

Main findings

You and your staff have made good use of the findings from the section 5 inspection to devise well-considered action plans. Senior leaders, year-group, inclusion and subject leaders, and governors and staff all share your determination for the school to become good. Their engagement in devising the action plans has ensured that they all understand how their work contributes to school improvement. Year-group and subject leaders' plans support the school's main improvement plan. These action plans clearly set out what needs to be done. However, often the plan cites the team or individual leading on an action as the person also monitoring the impact of the same action. This duplication of role limits the plan's effectiveness. Governors are keen to see the school improve and have recently implemented a monitoring and evaluation group. Clearly identifying in the school's improvement plan the role governors will play in evaluating the impact of actions taken will strengthen your improvement planning further.

You have introduced a new assessment tracking system following the removal of national curriculum levels. You and your class teachers use this information to identify where additional support is needed and to focus teachers' planning to address needs. However, you and your senior leaders and governors have rightly identified the need to review how the school records and tracks pupils' progress and outcomes, so that you can be sure that the measures of the proportions of pupils meeting the targets set are accurate.

A large number of intervention programmes is in place to help pupils catch up. This has been particularly effective in ensuring rapid gains for pupils' understanding of phonics (the sounds that letters represent). Teaching is improving. For example, a consistent approach to teaching phonics across the school is leading to a significant increase in the proportion of Year 1 pupils expected to meet the standard for 2016.

A recent visit and link with a local outstanding teaching school have encouraged staff to undertake classroom action research projects wholly focused on the development of teachers' skills and improving practices. This collaboration by staff on planning, teaching and observing and then critically reviewing the impact of teaching on pupils' learning is supporting improvements in the teaching of mathematics. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are raised. Pupils' mathematics books are now showing more opportunities for pupils to reason mathematically and solve problems of increasing complexity.

You have established more robust systems for reviewing the work of teachers. You and your leaders across the school have made clear expectations regarding the presentation of pupils' work and how work is reviewed. This has helped to ensure that there is greater consistency in marking across the school. In the last six months, you and your team have successfully implemented a new handwriting and presentation system. As a result, expectations about the quality and quantity of pupils' work in the different subjects have increased. The work recorded in pupils' topic books has improved significantly since the last inspection and is less reliant on the use of worksheets to support pupils' recording. Fluent, written records of increasing length are more evident in pupils' topic books as staff have focused on ensuring that literacy skills are applied across all subjects in the curriculum.

The leader of the early years provision is highly effective, and his commitment in addressing the areas identified for improvement has borne fruit. Leaders' information gathered from observations, scrutiny of learning in learning journals and on display, and moderation, provides evidence that the quality of teaching in early years has improved. Children are making progress. Leaders predict that the number of children reaching a good level of development will be above the national average in 2016.

External support

The local authority has provided challenge through overseeing the setting of ambitious, termly targets for all year groups across the school in reading, writing and mathematics. This is helping to secure ongoing improvements in attainment. It has provided effective support through bespoke training for the new literacy leader and the governing body. The school also draws on the local authority training and development service for governors and staff well. Plans are in place for additional work alongside local authority consultants to provide literacy and numeracy support.

The school has benefited from training and visiting a local outstanding teaching school, a link brokered by the local authority. You, your governors and senior leaders are also being proactive in exploring links with other local schools to further develop effective teaching practices.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Croydon. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jean Thwaites

Her Majesty's Inspector