

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



26 May 2011

Mrs Tilley
Allenton Community Primary School
Brookhouse Street
Allenton
Derby
DE24 9BB

Dear Mrs Tilley

Special measures: monitoring inspection of Allenton Community Primary School

Following my visit with David Lewis, additional inspector, to your school on 24 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 inspection was the fourth monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in October 2009. 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 – satisfactory.

Progress since previous monitoring inspection – good.

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 Derby

Yours sincerely

Susan Walsh
Additional inspector



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in October 2009.

- Raise standards in writing at Key Stage 2 by:
 - using accurate assessment of pupils' work to plan challenging lessons
 - giving pupils more opportunities to write at length in all subjects
 - having high expectations of pupils' punctuation and spelling in all lessons.

- Ensure consistently good teaching by:
 - making regular evaluations of lessons that show teachers clearly how to improve their practice
 - sharing the good practice already evident at the school.

- Improve the impact of the leadership and management by:
 - monitoring and evaluating the impact of initiatives more thoroughly
 - making better use of the data on pupils' progress to support those whose learning is too slow.



Special measures: monitoring of Allenton Community Primary School

Report from the fourth monitoring inspection on 24 May 2011

Evidence

The inspectors observed 15 part lessons and visited a range of the extra sessions for pupils who are in danger of falling behind. They also scrutinised documents, looked at samples of pupils' work in literacy and mathematics, and met with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, pupils and members of the governing body.

Context

Since the previous monitoring visit there have been no changes to staffing. However, one of the assistant headteachers is taking maternity leave soon and the Early Years Foundation Stage coordinator will be taking over the role of assistant headteacher until her return.

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

Children are continuing to make good progress in the Reception classes. The good attention paid to developing children's skills in writing, together with a clear focus on developing children's understanding of the links between sounds and letters, is causing children to make even quicker progress. Good practice from Key Stage 1 is being successfully transferred to the Early Years Foundation Stage and children are supplied with planning sheets and other useful resources that help them to understand how to structure their writing. Teachers consistently reinforce the need for good punctuation and children respond well. They enjoy writing and are enthusiastic because they are writing for a real purpose. For example, they have written to invite their parents to come into school and see their work about circuses. This good progress is built upon in Key Stage 1. Although attainment is still below average in reading and writing at the end of Year 2, it has improved significantly. Attainment in mathematics in Key Stage 1 is now close to the national average.

Progress in writing is continuing to improve in Key Stage 2. Progress in writing is now satisfactory in Years 3 and 4 and is good in Year 5. However progress in writing is still relatively slow in Year 6. The introduction of lessons that encourage pupils in Years 3 and 4 to make specific links between letters and sounds has been successful, and pupils' spellings are becoming more accurate. The school's formal spelling programme is particularly effective in Year 5. By the end of Year 5, pupils are producing lively, engaging and technically accurate pieces of writing of which they are justifiably very proud. A real love of writing is fostered in this class, and both boys and girls are brimming over with enthusiasm for learning. Pupils in Year 5 get ample opportunities to write at length but this is not a consistent feature of provision throughout the school. The school is aware that opportunities are missed



to develop pupils' writing during the teaching of foundation subjects. The love of learning which is so evident in Year 5 is not always reflected in Year 6. Pupils in Year 6 can be slow to get on with the task in hand when they are working independently and this has a negative impact on their learning. Attainment at the end of Year 6 is still low and relatively few pupils are working at the higher levels.

Extra sessions are boosting the progress of those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and others who find learning hard. Support staff have good relationships with these pupils and this helps to give pupils confidence. Staff are moving pupils' reading beyond the simple decoding of words and are helping pupils to understand the meanings of unfamiliar words. The needs of lower attaining pupils are not being always being met in mathematics lessons in Key Stage 2. This is because teachers' explanations are not always pitched at the correct level and the work set is sometimes too hard for these pupils. Timely interventions by teaching assistants in these lessons help pupils to understand what is being asked of them and they carefully explain how to tackle calculations. Although this support is of good quality, it cannot compensate fully for the specific weaknesses in the overall quality of teaching and, consequently, too many lower attaining pupils are still not making sufficient progress in mathematics in Years 3, 4 and 6.

Progress since the last inspection on the area for improvement:

- raise standards in writing in Key Stage 2 by planning challenging lessons, extending writing opportunities and having consistently high expectations of spelling and punctuation – satisfactory.

Other relevant pupil outcomes

Pupils greatly enjoy school and value all that it offers them, saying that they 'like all their lessons'. They behave well in school, are exceptionally welcoming, and have very good manners. This results in a good atmosphere in the dining hall at lunchtime and in the playground at break times. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds work hard and apply themselves well until they reach Year 6. Although they do not misbehave in Year 6, they lack the keenness that is present in other year groups, though they are confident about moving on to secondary school.

The effectiveness of provision

Teaching has improved further in both the Reception classes and Key Stage 1. Outstanding teaching was observed in the Reception classes and teaching is consistently good in Key Stage 1. These improvements in teaching have resulted in accelerated progress and rising levels of attainment in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1.



Observations of lessons are now an established part of school life. Weaknesses in practice are identified, and the support given by more experienced members of staff to those teachers who need to further develop their skills is having a positive impact. This is particularly so for the teaching of writing. Consequently, teaching in Key Stage 2 is now improving at a faster rate and there is less inadequate teaching. Improvements have also occurred because teachers are now sharing good practice on a regular basis. They have observed each other's teaching and have also talked about practice in different key stages during staff meetings. Teachers in Key Stage 2 have seen how successfully teachers in Key Stage 1 use checklists to help pupils to develop their writing and have adopted similar strategies. As a result, the teaching of writing is much improved in Years 3 and 4, and pupils are making much better progress. Work is usually well matched to pupils' needs in most lessons, although it is sometimes too hard for lower attaining pupils in mathematics lessons in Key Stage 2. There is now a much better level of challenge for more able children in mathematics lessons, and all pupils are encouraged to show their working out. As a result, pupils are using a good range of strategies when they tackle problems. However, they still make very basic arithmetical errors in their calculations which stop them getting the right answer. Pupils now respond much better to teachers' marking, which is often meticulous, and this is helping to accelerate pupils' progress. The use of academic targets is inconsistent in Key Stage 2, and pupils in some classes have a very limited recall of their targets in reading and writing. Teachers are making more effective use of information and communication technology and this is helping teachers to communicate efficiently and to share good practice.

The good level of sensitive individual support that is provided helps pupils to feel safe and secure. Although the school works hard to encourage good attendance, erratic attendance continues to have a detrimental effect on the progress of a small number of pupils.

Progress since the last inspection on the area of improvement:

- ensure consistently good teaching by monitoring and improving teaching and sharing existing good practice – good.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The headteacher has grown in confidence and clearly shares her ambition for the school with the governing body, senior managers, staff and pupils. There is a very positive ethos in the school because everyone is focused on bringing about improvement. Rigorous monitoring and evaluation means that the school knows where weaknesses lie, and the school now has a much clearer idea of what to do about them. Senior leaders are becoming more robust in their approach and are increasingly decisive. They are not afraid to make difficult decisions. For example,



when a new approach to promoting pupils' mental arithmetic skills was found to have a limited impact on pupils' progress in mathematics, it was promptly abandoned so that time could be given to more effective strategies. Improvements have been made to assessment systems and these improvements are helping the school to ensure that the information it holds about pupils' progress is absolutely accurate. Rigorous moderation of assessments of writing has been particularly useful because the school has been able to pinpoint exactly what aspect of writing each pupil needs to improve. Assessments systems employed in the Reception classes have been adopted by some Key Stage 2 teachers in order to provide more evidence to support their judgements about the levels at which older pupils are working. Improved monitoring has led the school to conclude that it needs to review its handwriting policy so that the practice that is developed in the Reception class is consistently built upon throughout the school. This is a good example of how staff in all key stages are now working together much more effectively in order to secure better outcomes for pupils.

New subject leaders are continuing to develop their skills. They have had the opportunity to directly monitor teaching and to think about how these observations link to the information they have about pupils' work. This has enabled them to come to more secure judgements about where improvements can be made. However, they have still not taken on sufficient responsibility for data analysis. Nevertheless, subject leaders are having a greater impact on their subject areas. For example, the mathematics coordinator has delivered training relating to use of the school's calculation policy that has encouraged a greater consistency of approach across the school. The governing body has developed very good methods for observing and recording the school at work. Its precise focus on attainment and progress means that it knows the school's strengths and areas for development very well and is able to provide the school with effective challenge and support. The school has already involved the prospective acting assistant headteacher in the activities of the leadership team. She has worked closely with the substantive assistant headteacher and the school has planned well for a smooth transfer of responsibilities.

Progress since the last inspection on the area of improvement:

- improve the impact of leadership and management through improved monitoring and use of data – good.

External support

The school has received appropriate support from the local authority. The school has a new School Improvement Partner. Although he has only been appointed very recently he already has a clear understanding of where the school needs to develop and has planned a schedule of visits that focus on effecting improvement in the remaining areas of weakness.

