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11 December 2018

Miss Margaret McBride
Whinmoor St Paul's Church of England Primary School
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Dear Miss McBride

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Whinmoor St Paul's Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 29 November 2018, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the monitoring 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 monitoring inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 and has taken place because the school has received three successive judgements of requires improvement at its previous section 5 inspections.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection in order for the school to become good.

The school should take further action to:

- continue to raise the profile of reading so that more pupils achieve a greater depth in reading in key stage 1 and the higher standard in key stage 2
- ensure that plans to strengthen the quality of curriculum guidance, that identify the progression of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills in subjects beyond English and mathematics, are fully realised
- continue to work with parents and outside agencies to improve attendance for those pupils who are regularly absent from school.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with you and your senior leadership team. I held a telephone conversation with the education advisor for the Diocese

of Leeds. I also met with a representative from the local authority. I examined a range of documents, including the school improvement plan, the school's self-evaluation records, assessment information, governing body minutes and attendance and behaviour records. I met with chair, and vice-chair, of the governing body. I scrutinised a sample of pupils' work with the English leader and the mathematics leader. I met with some middle leaders. I visited all classes with you and the deputy headteacher and I listened to some pupils in Year 2 read. I met with a group of pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6. I talked to some parents at the end of the school day. I also took account of the school's recent parent survey results, as well as the 36 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View.

Context

Since the previous inspection in October 2017, three new governors have joined the governing body. The school also has a new chair of governors. You have appointed a new pastoral lead. Recently, the school has seen an increase in the number of pupils who join the school at times other than at the start of the school year.

Main findings

Since the previous inspection, you have implemented an effective improvement plan to address the areas for improvement identified. Leaders review this regularly to check the impact of actions on improving the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. Staff and governors are clear about the main priorities for improvement. They are committed and dedicated to the continuous improvement of the school.

Expectations of what pupils, including children in the early years, can and should achieve have been raised. Most pupils take pride in the presentation of their work. Pupils told me that they feel challenged most of the time, particularly in mathematics lessons. Work in pupils' books shows that pupils, particularly the most able, are being moved on to more challenging work when they are ready. Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is more effective due to regular review meetings held between teachers and the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo). This ensures timely support and intervention for pupils with SEND when needed. The SENCo regularly analyses the effect of this support.

As a result of the actions you and other leaders have taken to improve the quality of teaching, pupil outcomes are improving. Provisional outcomes for 2018 indicate that the proportion of Year 6 pupils attaining the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined was in line with the national average. This is an improvement from 2017. Year 6 pupils made progress in the key stage 2 national tests that was well above the national average in writing and above the national average in mathematics. The progress made by pupils in reading was in line with pupils with similar starting points nationally. In key stage 1 in reading, a

much higher than average proportion of pupils reach the expected standard. However, a lower proportion of pupils achieved a greater depth in their reading compared to that found nationally.

You have rightly identified reading as a main area for improvement, so that the progress made by pupils in reading is in line with that seen in mathematics and writing. As a result, leaders are raising the profile of reading across the school. For example, pupils spoke about the school's focus on the 'joy of reading'. This has included pupils working with a visiting author. Teachers regularly read to pupils as a dedicated feature of the curriculum. The proportion of Year 1 pupils passing the phonics screening check improved in 2018 and is now in line with the national average. However, occasionally lower-prior-attaining pupils are unable to use their phonics skills effectively as the books they are learning to read with are not matched closely enough to their abilities.

Since the previous inspection, you have strengthened leadership by ensuring that senior and middle leaders are now being held to account. You have invested in the professional development of leaders so that they can carry out their roles effectively. As a result, the leaders I spoke to during the monitoring inspection feel fully accountable for the part they play in school improvement. Leaders now attend governing body meetings so that governors can ask questions about the effect of leaders' work to improve the school. Leaders carry out regular checks to ensure that actions in development plans are leading to improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. As a result, they understand what has worked well and the areas for further improvement.

You have developed systems to analyse behaviour, attendance and pupils' progress trends. You have appointed a pastoral lead to support pupils and to analyse behaviour patterns. You ensure that attendance trends are now analysed frequently. This means that staff can intervene more quickly when issues arise. As a result, pupils' attendance continues to be slightly above the national average. However, the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND is below that of their peers. You recognise that the number of pupils who are regularly absent from school has increased. You have already identified as a main priority to continue to work with parents and outside agencies to ensure that the attendance of these pupils improves.

Middle leaders are currently reviewing curriculum plans. For instance, the leader for history and geography is working with the local authority to improve curriculum guidance for teachers so that pupils' historical knowledge, understanding of chronology, and inference skills build progressively. However, leaders acknowledge that there is more to do to ensure that pupils' work in all subjects matches the standards seen in English and mathematics.

The pupils I spoke to hold positive views about the school. They said, 'We come to school to learn.' They told me that pupils typically behave well, and they do not

hear inappropriate language being used in school.

External support

The local authority provides a range of support to the school. Reports from the local authority are detailed and highlight clear next steps. This support is helping to strengthen leadership and improve the quality of teaching. Since the previous inspection, leaders and staff have worked closely with a teaching school alliance and a local cluster of schools. This is enabling staff to develop more effective systems to check the work of the school. For example, working with a local cluster of schools, leaders have developed more effective systems to monitor pupils' attendance and behaviour. This enables leaders to evaluate trends over time and check if actions taken are successful.

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

Yours sincerely

Michele Costello

Her Majesty's Inspector