

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231  
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17 October 2019

John Read  
Lyneham Primary School  
Preston Lane  
Lyneham  
Chippenham  
Wiltshire  
SN15 4QJ

Dear Mr Read

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Lyneham Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 7 October 2019, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the monitoring inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions that have been taken 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 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 for the school to become good.

The school should take further action to:

- ensure that middle leaders develop the capacity to improve consistency and to raise standards in their areas of responsibility
- ensure that teachers routinely outline what they want pupils to learn and check that pupils understand the steps that they need to take to do so.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, senior leaders and subject leaders to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. Other meetings were with

members of the governing body, a local authority officer, and with a group of pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6. I visited lessons in every year group jointly with school leaders. I evaluated the school improvement plan.

## **Context**

Since the last inspection, you have continued to expand middle leadership roles to increase leadership capacity. This has included the appointment of three phase leaders, who work alongside curriculum leaders to monitor the quality of education that the school provides.

A new school improvement adviser began work with the school in September 2019. Her role is to challenge and support school leaders on behalf of the local authority.

## **Main findings**

You continue to work with determination to improve the areas of concern identified at the previous inspection. Senior leaders have devised improvement plans that are fit for purpose. These outline key goals so that you and your governors can track the progress made.

Governors are aware of the school's areas of strength and those areas that need to be improved further. They challenge your team because they recognise that the pace of improvement has not been rapid enough in the past. To this end, they have strengthened their monitoring systems so that they have a better understanding of the work of the school.

You and your deputy headteacher work effectively together. You have a clear vision for the school and are ambitious for what pupils can achieve. For example, you have chosen challenging reading books for pupils. These extend pupils' vocabulary for their writing. To increase the pace of improvement, you have actively made links with other schools, both locally and across the country, to learn from effective practice elsewhere.

You have given considerable thought to the way in which the curriculum is organised. You and other leaders are mindful of the fact that many pupils join or leave the school at points other than the usual transition times. This has shaped your thinking about the content of the curriculum, as many pupils have had several educational experiences prior to joining the school. The school's curriculum has breadth and promotes individual subject disciplines well. Central to this rationale, you want pupils to explore themes that give them the background knowledge to make links within their learning. There is a focus on the vocabulary and concepts that teachers want pupils to remember.

You have researched how to make the curriculum content both fresh and engaging, particularly for boys. Pupils enjoy this new way of working. They give examples of

where their current work builds on what they have done before. They use the 'learning walls' in their classrooms to remind them of things that they have done previously. Both governors and staff have been fully involved in the development of these ideas. Thus, there is a shared understanding of this new approach.

Senior leaders meet with you regularly to collate and discuss information from regular checks on learning. You make good use of these findings to inform your actions. This has led to improvement in the standards that pupils achieve by the end of key stage 2, particularly in mathematics.

Curriculum leaders work with the school improvement adviser from the local authority to develop their expertise in monitoring classroom practice effectively. This has, so far, been most effective in mathematics. Other curriculum leaders are, therefore, using the lessons learned to improve reading and writing and other subjects.

Since the previous inspection, your senior team have trained teachers on how to use assessment more precisely. Teachers can explicitly identify the skills that pupils need to improve their writing. This begins in Reception, where pupils practise early mark making. Pupils continue to practise their handwriting skills as they move through key stage 1.

Older pupils demonstrate increasing stamina to write more extensively. The most able pupils show that they are adept at varying their vocabulary. They structure their writing effectively. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well by teachers and additional adults. Where the approach to reading and writing is not as effective, teachers are less confident in applying the agreed strategies.

There is greater consistency in the teaching of mathematics. As a result, there has been an improvement in pupils' mathematical fluency and calculation skills. It is testament to your team's self-reflection that they have identified that pupils are not so confident when learning about shape, space and measure. In response, staff are modifying their curriculum plans, including in the early years phase, to place greater emphasis on these aspects of the mathematics curriculum. The most able pupils have frequent opportunities to apply their knowledge to problem-solving activities. Pupils can increasingly explain how they have arrived at an answer and the rationale for their reasoning.

Where teaching is not as effective, teachers do not make what they want pupils to learn clear enough. In some cases, pupils are unsure of what to do and make calculation errors because their basic number skills are not good enough. Some low prior attaining pupils struggle with their mathematical reasoning. You understand the need for pupils to regularly recap their previous learning and have built time into the curriculum for them to do so.

You continue to strengthen the transition arrangements for the families of pupils that join the school from service backgrounds. There are regular meetings with these families to ensure that pupils integrate well into the school community. You share information with parents and carers more regularly so that they are informed about the progress that their children are making. The support provided for pupils from service backgrounds helps them to settle quickly.

### **External support**

The local authority has supported the school since the last inspection. Local authority officers conduct regular visits to evaluate the school's effectiveness. The conclusions from these visits mirror leaders' understanding that there is progress and that the speed of improvement is increasing. There is a shared understanding that leaders need time to embed their strategies and ensure that there is consistent implementation of the agreed approaches.

You seek to make links with other schools across the country to learn from effective practice. You, the board of governors and senior leadership have increasing capacity for continued school improvement. Recently, the school received the 'Inclusion Quality Mark' which recognises your work to support pupils with SEND.

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

Yours sincerely

Sarah McGinnis  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**