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Mr Nick Sharp
Bishop Tufnell Church of England Primary School
Pennyfields
Felpham
Bognor Regis
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Dear Mr Sharp

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Bishop Tufnell Church of England Primary School, Felpham

Following my visit to your school on 18 December 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 two successive judgements of requires improvement at its previous section 5 inspections.

Senior leaders and governors are not taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the last section 5 inspection in order for the school to become good.

The school should take further action to:

- prioritise reading so that this critical aspect of the school's work improves rapidly
- re-focus leaders' actions, via the school's improvement plan, so that there is a clear emphasis on developing an ambitious curriculum for all pupils
- focus leaders' and governors' monitoring and evaluation more sharply on these aspects to ensure the pace of improvement accelerates.

Evidence

During the inspection, I met with you, the deputy headteacher, local authority and diocesan representatives and a group of governors, including the chair of governors, to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I evaluated the school's

improvement plan.

In addition, I made short visits to a range of lessons with you and the deputy headteacher. I met with pupils and looked at their work. I met with a group of curriculum leaders and a group of staff. I considered a range of documentation.

Context

Since the last full inspection, 15 members of staff have left the school and nine have joined. These changes include teachers, teaching assistants and administrative staff. Senior leaders and governors completed a staff restructure during the summer term 2019.

Main findings

The school is not currently on track to be judged good at the next section 5 inspection. Senior leaders and governors consider the pace of improvement to have been too slow. I agree. Although leaders have made some improvements, these are not yet sufficient to secure the right path towards a good quality of education for pupils. Leaders' plans for further improvement are not ambitious enough.

Leaders have focused on improving teaching strategies, but not enough on what is being taught. They have targeted their work to raise expectations of teaching in lessons. This is reflected in the school's improvement plan and leaders' monitoring. Leaders feel their efforts have been frustrated by changes in staff and judge that the quality of teaching has not improved quickly enough. However, leaders have done much less to develop the curriculum across the school. Beyond writing and mathematics, curriculum development has been too limited overall, including, crucially, in reading. Pupils' achievement varies widely, as does the way teachers implement the curriculum in different subjects. Even the strong science curriculum, recently introduced, is not yet being put into practice effectively.

Leaders, therefore, have not given enough attention to ensuring that the requirements of the national curriculum are met effectively. The curriculum is not ambitious enough for pupils, including the most able. Senior leaders have yet to rationalise the shape and nature of the curriculum to ensure it meets all pupils' needs. There is still much to do to improve disadvantaged pupils' progress through the curriculum, especially during key stage 2. While the well-organised governing body monitors the school's progress regularly and has a realistic view of its effectiveness, its evaluations do not focus on these crucial areas closely enough.

Leaders have not sufficiently prioritised necessary improvements in reading. Reading does not feature significantly in the school's newly revised improvement plan, or in last year's plan. Work to improve pupils' early reading has led to a modest rise in the outcomes of the Year 1 phonics screening check. However, pupils' achievement in reading at the end of key stages 1 and 2 remains low. Although

some initial work has recently started, not enough has been done to improve the reading curriculum through to the end of key stage 2. The school's English curriculum is therefore incomplete. It also does not map out how and when speaking and listening requirements will be taught.

More positively, the writing element of the English curriculum is improving. This is now better rationalised across year groups. Pupils are enthusiastic about writing and articulate a deepening understanding of their learning. Equally, the revised mathematics curriculum means pupils' learning is better organised and sequenced. Teachers' subject knowledge is growing. Pupils increasingly connect what they are learning now with what they have learned before. Assessment tasks support this by requiring pupils to bring together knowledge they have learned over time. However, while the quality of pupils' learning in mathematics and writing is improving, this has yet to have an impact on pupils' achievement at the end of key stages 1 and 2.

A new behaviour policy has been effective in improving pupils' engagement and attitudes in lessons, and teachers' management of pupils' behaviour. All the staff and pupils that I spoke to talked about the benefits they have experienced. While some low-level disruption remains, this crucial aspect is heading strongly in the right direction. Along with developments in writing and mathematics, this demonstrates leaders' abilities to make necessary improvements.

External support

The local authority and diocese monitor the school's progress, sometimes working together to do this. The school has made good use of some appropriate, well-targeted support provided for English and mathematics. This is clearly evident in the improvements that have been achieved. Less effective have been the support and advice for leaders about the focuses of the improvement plan, since these are not well aligned with key improvements required for the quality of education to be judged good at the next inspection.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the Director of Education for the Diocese of Chichester, the regional schools commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for West Sussex. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Matthew Haynes
Her Majesty's Inspector