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Mrs Sally Alford
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Alford

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Carr Hill Primary and Nursery School

Following my visit to your school on 11 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:

- ensure rapid and sustained improvements to pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2
- implement urgent improvements to the teaching of early reading and phonics, so that pupils quickly become fluent readers and the proportion of pupils who meet the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check improves to at least the national average
- accelerate the work to develop the curriculum, so that it is coherently planned and sequenced towards pupils knowing more and remembering more over time.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior leaders and the chair of the governing body, to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. A telephone interview was held with a representative of the local authority. The school improvement plan was evaluated.

A range of inspection activities was carried out. These included lesson visits, a discussion with a group of pupils, hearing pupils read, scrutinising samples of pupils' work across a range of subjects, examining published performance data, and reading minutes of meetings of the governing body and external reports on the school's performance.

A meeting was held with the designated senior lead for safeguarding and the school's single central record of employment checks was scrutinised.

Main findings

Leaders have not taken effective action to improve reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils do not achieve well in these subjects. Pupils are not well prepared for secondary education. At the last inspection, leaders were asked to focus on raising standards in writing. This has not been accomplished.

Since the last inspection, further weaknesses have emerged relating to reading. Pupils do not achieve well in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Pupils do not achieve well in reading by the end of key stage 2. During this inspection, I discussed reading with leaders and I listened to younger pupils read. It was evident that pupils in Year 1 are not given books that are closely connected to their phonics knowledge. The focus on the teaching of early reading is not sharp or systematic enough.

The inconsistencies in the ways in which teachers plan and implement the curriculum were still evident during this inspection. In discussion, pupils could not recall key concepts from their topic work. Pupils' books show that teachers do not have consistently high expectations. Teachers do not insist that pupils heed the feedback provided to help them improve their work.

As recommended, the school has focused on improving pupils' handwriting and presentation. Staff have introduced bronze, silver and gold presentation awards to encourage and motivate pupils. However, this has not led to sustained improvement. In too many cases, standards of presentation are still not high enough.

The evidence relating to mathematics is more positive. Pupils' workbooks indicate that pupils' achievement in mathematics is improving. Leaders are providing a

strong steer in this area. They understand what needs to be done to drive improvements.

Leaders' plans for using the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils contain an appropriate balance of support for pupils' learning and welfare needs. However, disadvantaged pupils do not achieve well across the curriculum.

Leaders' improvement plans are detailed and are clearly focused on the recommendations from the last inspection. However, too many actions are planned for later in the year. There is a lack of urgency in tackling weaknesses. Plans also show that leaders have not responded to the declining standards in reading. Reading is not stated as a priority in the school improvement plan.

External support

The school has received significant support and guidance from external partners, in particular from the local authority. However, this has not resulted in the necessary improvements. Evidence from written reports and from my telephone conversation with the local authority representative indicates that it has taken some time to identify the barriers to improvement at this school. Following a recent in-depth review of teaching and learning, advisers finally feel they have a clear view of what needs to be done. The local authority should work strenuously with leaders to ensure measurable improvement by the end of this academic year, to avoid pupils falling further behind.

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

Yours sincerely

Christine Watkins
Her Majesty's Inspector