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Sally Alford
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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 6 May 2021, 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(2) 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.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the 2020-21 COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. I discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in my evaluation.

Having considered the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time:

Leaders and those responsible for governance are taking effective action in order for the school to become a good school.

The school should take further action to:

- complete the planned work to incorporate the early years foundation stage into the whole-school curriculum plans.

Context

All pupils and staff returned to school on 8 March 2021, when schools reopened to all pupils.

Leaders recognise the pressures that COVID-19 has placed on families. Consequently, they have strengthened the personal, social and health education curriculum and pastoral work to support pupils' mental health and well-being.

Since the last inspection, a new business manager, special educational needs coordinator and chair of governors have been appointed.

Main findings

Leaders have systematically addressed the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Leaders and governors ensure that they review their plans for improvement regularly. They have set clear, appropriate timescales for measuring the impact of their actions. There is strong capacity to drive continued improvement.

Since the last inspection, leaders have rewritten the curriculum in all subjects. The revised plans set out what pupils should know, and when, from Years 1 to 6. Curriculum leaders and other staff have received training to support them to deliver the new curriculum. Work is currently under way to ensure that curriculum plans include, and build on, what children have learned in the early years foundation stage.

COVID-19 has placed some limits on leaders' ability to check the impact of the curriculum on pupils' progress. However, leaders have noted early signs that pupils are now able to know more and remember more in those areas of the curriculum that leaders have checked. This was confirmed during the inspection, in relation to science and mathematics.

In discussion, pupils told me that teachers revisit prior learning at the start of each lesson. They say that this helps them to learn better, commenting that, 'It helps it stick in your mind'. Pupils could confidently recall what they had learned about the circulatory system from their science lessons in the autumn term. The work in their books shows that lessons follow a clear sequence, to allow pupils to build their knowledge over time.

Leaders have rewritten the reading curriculum since the last inspection. They introduced a new phonics programme in January 2020. Staff have been trained to deliver phonics teaching to pupils of any age who are in the early stages of learning to read. When I observed pupils reading to a familiar adult, their enthusiasm for reading was clear to see. Staff consistently encouraged pupils to apply their phonics

knowledge when tackling unfamiliar words. As a result, pupils were able to read confidently from books that were well matched to their needs.

Additional support

The local authority has provided regular support for the school since the last inspection. This has had a positive impact on the quality of leadership, early reading and curriculum development. A summer programme of support has been agreed with leaders, to refine and strengthen curriculum leadership.

Evidence

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, other senior and curriculum leaders, pupils, staff, the chair of governors and a representative of the local authority to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection.

I visited lessons and observed pupils reading to a member of staff. I reviewed responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 20 free-text responses, and 29 staff questionnaires. I reviewed the school's improvement plans, curriculum plans, minutes of governors' meetings and reports from the local authority. I reviewed the single central register of pre-employment checks.

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 County Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Christine Watkins
Her Majesty's Inspector