

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Petra Jones
Headteacher
Winterbourne Nursery and Infants' School
Winterbourne Road
Thornton Heath
Surrey
CR7 7QT

Dear Ms Jones

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Winterbourne Nursery and Infants' School

Following my visit to your school on 11 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 three successive judgements of requires improvement at its previous section 5 inspections.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. I discussed the impact of the pandemic with you 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:

- ensure that teaching supports all pupils, particularly those pupils with lower prior attainment and those who are at the early stages of speaking English as an additional language, to learn the curriculum
- ensure that teachers check how well pupils remember the phonic knowledge that they have been taught and that pupils practise this knowledge when they are reading and writing
- build on leaders' and governors' existing work to make sure that all parents are informed about the positive changes made at the school.

Context

Since the previous inspection, there have been significant changes to the leadership team. The acting headteacher took up her post in March 2020. New governors have been recruited and an assistant headteacher has recently been appointed.

Main findings

Since you took up your post, you have made clear progress in addressing the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection in December 2019. You have motivated staff, who expressed confidence in your calm, capable leadership. Staff are committed and proud to work at the school.

Leaders and teachers have worked collaboratively to implement a revised curriculum. They have ensured that planning for all subjects is now well sequenced and develops pupils' knowledge and skills over time.

Pupils are being taught the revised curriculum. This is evident in books and in lessons. All staff follow the school's phonics programme. This means that phonics is being taught consistently across the school, including in the early years. However, there are still some pockets of weak subject knowledge among staff. Leaders have plans to address this.

Pupils are taught sounds in line with the school's phonics programme. However, occasionally, teachers do not routinely check whether pupils remember and use these sounds accurately in their writing. This means that teachers sometimes do not know which sounds pupils need to revisit and practise the most.

The reading curriculum is ambitious and well planned. The impact of the training staff receive is clear. Staff aim to develop pupils' fluency and ask a range of questions to deepen pupils' understanding of the text. Teachers select books which are well matched to pupils' ability. However, the implementation of the reading curriculum is variable. Teaching is sometimes not well focused on ensuring that all pupils build their reading ability step by step. This is particularly the case for pupils

who need additional support, including those pupils with lower prior attainment and those who are at the early stages of speaking English as an additional language.

You and your team are securing important improvements in the curriculum for mathematics, science and history. Teachers are implementing the revised curriculum in these subjects. The curriculum sets out what knowledge pupils should learn and by when. Pupils' work shows that they are building up their knowledge in these subjects. Teaching focuses on helping pupils to remember and consolidate new knowledge and skills. However, this is not always the case for those pupils with lower prior attainment and those who are learning to speak English as an additional language.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are keen to be back at school following the period of time when schools were only open to some children due to COVID-19 restrictions. There is a kind, caring culture evident in classrooms. Pupils are thrilled when teachers say, 'Give yourself a whoosh!', when they have done well.

Leaders and governors have detailed plans in place to improve the school. These have not been fine-tuned to focus precisely on the priorities for improvement at the current time. Leaders' and governors' own evaluation of the school does not reflect the improvements achieved since the previous inspection. However, leaders are in the process of updating their own evaluation of the impact of their work.

Following Ofsted's remote visit to the school in February 2021, leaders and governors have implemented a range of activities to inform parents about the school's work. You have aimed to engage those parents who have lost confidence in the school. Despite this, according to the Ofsted survey, a significant number of parents remain unhappy with the school. Your own recent survey of parents had much more positive results. However, there is still further work to be done to make sure that all parents are informed about the progress being made.

Additional support

You and the leadership team continue to benefit from the support and advice from the local authority. You find the regular local authority reports helpful in identifying priorities for improvement.

Evidence

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, the assistant headteacher, representatives of those responsible for governance, and other leaders to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection.

I visited a range of lessons with leaders, sampled a range of pupils' books, and reviewed documentation relating to the school's plans for improvement.

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

Yours sincerely

Ruth Dollner
Her Majesty's Inspector