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Mark Ratchford
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Ratchford

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Market Deeping Community Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 20 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 COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. 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:

- complete the work subject leaders have started by ensuring that all subject plans precisely set out the important knowledge that all pupils must learn and the order in which they should learn it.

Context

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

Since the last inspection, leaders have appointed an additional teacher and a business manager. One governor is new to the role.

Leaders have continued to develop the school's curriculum. To ensure curriculum improvements are managed well, subject leadership responsibilities have been reorganised.

Leaders recognise the impact COVID-19 has had on learning for pupils. Some pupils have not remembered some sounds to help them in their reading. Leaders have changed their plans to address this. Teachers have revisited sounds pupils need to help them read words. To support pupils who need extra help to catch up with their learning, leaders have increased communication with families.

Main findings

Since the last inspection, leaders have continued to improve the school's curriculum. They have started to set out in curriculum plans the knowledge pupils need to learn. However, leaders have not made sure that this is the case across all subjects. Some subject plans do not set out in enough detail the knowledge that pupils need to gain. Leaders recognise that curriculum plans need more work to support pupils' preparation for the next stage in their education.

Some leaders have attended curriculum training in their subject. This has led to improvements in subjects such as science. Some training has been delayed due to COVID-19. This has slowed developments in the curriculum for some subjects.

During lessons, teachers are beginning to revisit knowledge that pupils need to remember. Pupils said that recapping learning helps them to make sense of new knowledge. For example, in science, pupils could use some of their knowledge about teeth from earlier science lessons to understand how diet affects tooth decay. Leaders know that opportunities for pupils to revisit what they have learned previously need to occur consistently across all subject areas.

Leaders have continued to check on the progress pupils make in phonics and reading. Some new reading books link closely to sounds pupils have learned and support pupils at the early stages of reading. Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) receive extra help with their reading and phonics. Teachers use digital platforms to share books and develop pupils' love of reading. Leaders are reviewing the current phonics programme.

The school's special needs team is working with teachers to help them understand how they can best support pupils with SEND in reading, writing and mathematics. Although leaders ensure that all pupils with SEND are included in lessons, the knowledge these pupils need to learn in all subjects is not clearly set out in curriculum plans. As a result, teachers are not always clear about how to support pupils with SEND to gain the knowledge they need in all curriculum areas.

Governors understand the school's priorities and provide support and challenge for leaders. They understand that subject leaders will need support to develop effective curriculum plans. Governors know they will need to make careful checks as the curriculum develops further.

The school's plans accurately show the actions leaders will take to improve the curriculum. Leaders understand that these changes need to happen quickly. Governors are using these plans to check leaders' work.

Additional support

The local authority has provided packages of support for the school. Support for leaders in developing subject plans has led to some improvements in the school's curriculum. The local authority has supported leaders in identifying next steps in their journey of improvement. Further regular support to develop subject leadership is planned.

Evidence

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, other senior and curriculum leaders, pupils, staff, 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 79 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 14 free-text responses, and 26 staff questionnaires. I reviewed the school's improvement plans, curriculum plans, minutes of governing body meetings and reports from the local authority. I reviewed the single central record 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 Lincolnshire County Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Shaheen Hussain
Seconded Inspector of Schools