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Dear Mr Hughes

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Crumpsall Lane 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 four 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:

- support pupils in Year 2 to catch up with the planned phonics programme

- develop further pupils' broader understanding of subjects such as science, art and design technology (DT) so that they gain a deeper understanding of the subjects that they study.

Context

- Following the retirement of the previous postholder, you were appointed as the executive headteacher of the North Manchester Primary Federation of schools in the Spring term 2021 following a short period of acting in this role. This federation oversees Crumpsall Lane Primary along with Crab Lane Primary School.
- Three teachers have left the school since the last section 5 inspection and three newly qualified teachers were appointed to these posts in September 2020.
- Two governors have resigned from the governing body and one new governor has been appointed to the board.

Main findings

- You and the senior leadership team are responding effectively to tackle the areas for improvement that were identified at the previous inspection. You are helping subject leaders to develop their role and to improve the knowledge of staff in subjects across the curriculum. The staff that I spoke to feel motivated and galvanised by a common purpose. Governors are similarly positive about the direction of the school. The development plans you have in place are fit for purpose. They set out a clear road map to enable Crumpsall Lane Primary to become a good school.
- Developing the reading curriculum has been a key priority. The phonics leader is supporting staff well to develop their knowledge so that they can deliver the phonics programme effectively. As a result, staff's confidence is improving and there is greater consistency in the way the phonics programme is being delivered. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities have more detailed plans in place to support the development of their reading skills.
- Teachers are better at matching the books that pupils read to the sounds that they are taught to further reinforce their learning. Children in the Reception Year, and pupils in Year 1, are applying their knowledge more proficiently when reading. Pupils enjoy reading because the new curriculum is starting to give them a sense of achievement. However, because an effective approach was not previously in place, made worse by the disruption to pupils' education caused by the pandemic, some Year 2 pupils have fallen too far behind in their learning. They are not catching up with the planned phonics programme quickly enough.
- In subjects across the curriculum, leaders are redefining what they want pupils to learn. Pupils' geography and history work demonstrates how leaders have started

to structure the curriculum to incrementally build pupils' knowledge. Pupils talked with enthusiasm about their work in DT because they have increased opportunities to learn about this subject. However, while the quality of the curriculum in subjects such as science, art and DT, is improving, leaders have not yet developed the broader aspects of each subject so that pupils know what is needed to work like a scientist, artist or designer.

- Governors ask challenging questions of leaders so that they are more knowledgeable about the school's improvement. They are working with leaders to better understand how their decisions are making a difference. They are using external support to assure themselves about the quality of education in the school.

Additional support

The staff value the support of colleagues from within the federation. They are working together on curriculum development, including in the early years. For example, they are sharing resources and expertise to start to map out how the early years curriculum feeds into the different subject curriculums in Year 1.

You are making the best use of the support provided by the local authority. This is giving you and your subject leaders assurance about the way in which you are developing the curriculum.

Evidence

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

I heard a small number of pupils read from across the school. I reviewed pupils' work in writing, art, history, design technology and geography and looked at the curriculum plans for these subjects in detail. I reviewed the improvement plan and the minutes of governors' meetings. I took account of the five responses to Ofsted's Parent View and the 37 responses to the staff survey.

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

Yours sincerely

Steve Bentham
Her Majesty's Inspector