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David Nightingale
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Dear Mr Nightingale

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Moorfield Community Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 27 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 had 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:

- review curriculum plans, for example in science, art, music and design, to ensure that the key knowledge that pupils will learn is clearly identified from early years to Year 6
- refine assessment methods in subjects other than English and mathematics, so that teachers know how well pupils are remembering what they learn

- ensure that governors challenge leaders more effectively around the work to improve the curriculum.

Context

Since the 2018 inspection, ten members of staff have left the school and seven new members of staff have joined the school. This included the appointments of a new deputy headteacher and inclusion coordinator.

There have also been significant changes to the governing body. Five new governors have joined and there is a new chair and vice-chair of the governing body.

Main findings

Following the previous inspection, you implemented an appropriate plan that identifies the right actions to improve the school. This is helping you to ensure that pupils receive a better quality of education. Governors and staff are positive about the direction that the school is taking. They share your ambition for pupils.

Before the pandemic started, you began developing curriculum plans that were ambitious and aimed at meeting the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). In most subjects, you have considered the knowledge that pupils will learn and the order in which it will be taught. However, the pandemic has prevented you from achieving this for all subjects. For example, curriculum plans in some subjects such as science, art and music do not clearly show what pupils will learn from early years to Year 6.

Subject leaders have developed an accurate understanding of the quality of education in their area of responsibility. They have adjusted curriculum plans to take into account gaps in pupils' learning that have arisen due to the pandemic. In subjects such as mathematics, writing and reading, staff use assessment well to plan activities that build on what pupils should already know. This is less well established in other subjects. This hinders teachers' understanding of what pupils have learned and remembered.

You and the reading lead have continued to make improvements to the reading curriculum. Staff receive appropriate training and support to ensure that they can deliver the phonics programme effectively. The pupils whom I observed reading used their phonics knowledge well to read books that are matched to the sounds that they already know. This is helping to improve their fluency. Teachers check on the progress that pupils are making with their phonics. They provide additional support for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND who have fallen behind with their phonic knowledge.

Governors are very supportive of the school. Evidence from minutes of their meetings show that they ask you pertinent questions about the education that pupils receive. They also check on the improvements being made to the English curriculum. However, the pandemic has affected their ability to challenge you and the staff more effectively on the work to improve the curriculum in other subjects.

Additional support

The support that the local authority, the local mathematics hub and external advisers have provided has supported the improvements that you and your staff have made so far. This support has been used to improve leadership skills, develop curriculum plans, and improve the teaching of early reading.

Evidence

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, senior leaders and other members of staff. I also met with three members of the governing body and held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection.

I visited lessons and met with a group of pupils to ask them about their work and their experiences of school life. I observed children and pupils reading to a trusted adult from Reception Year to Year 3.

I examined a variety of documentation, including the school improvement plan, minutes of governing body meetings and curriculum plans. I considered the 13 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, the three free-text comments and the 13 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.

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

Yours sincerely

Julie Barlow
Her Majesty's Inspector