

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



12 July 2021

Kelly Williams
Headteacher
Ferney Lee Primary School
Ferney Lee Road
Todmorden
West Yorkshire
OL14 5NR

Dear Mrs Williams

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Ferney Lee Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 22 June 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 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.

Context

At the time of this inspection, all Year 3 pupils and staff were self-isolating due to COVID-19. Pupils in Year 3 were learning remotely.

Main findings

Leaders have used the areas for improvement that Ofsted inspectors identified, in the May 2019 inspection, as the main priorities on the school's improvement plans. Following our additional, remote monitoring inspection in March 2021, leaders added the further recommended improvements to the plans. Leaders do not allow themselves to get distracted from these key priorities.

The school's improvement plans are succinct, but include sufficient detail to help governors check that leaders' plans are working. Governors attend training that is helping them understand how to evaluate leaders' progress accurately. The school's improvement plans include a monitoring timetable. All subject leaders are included in the plans. These middle leaders now have a much better understanding of their role and contribution. Reading and mathematics leaders can provide substantial evidence of the difference they are making to improve the quality of education.

The mathematics subject leader checks that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) join in with mathematics lessons. Teaching assistants sometimes prepare pupils with SEND through a 'sneak preview' of the next mathematics lesson. This helps pupils with SEND to succeed in the lesson when it comes. Pupils with SEND are thriving in response to these higher expectations. One parent said, 'I love how I know that he will be supported through any hurdle he comes across!'

Teachers provide practical resources to help pupils with SEND keep up when they are learning mathematics with their peers. There are effective transition arrangements in place for Year 6 pupils with SEND. They are already completing mathematics work which will be shared with their new teachers. This helps to prepare them well for the next stage of their learning.

Leaders are equally ambitious for the most able pupils. Leaders have increased opportunities for all pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge to reasoning and problem-solving. The mathematics curriculum is well sequenced. Pupils can remember what they learned when they were younger. Pupils draw on this knowledge to solve mathematical problems. Teachers check pupils' understanding and give feedback that corrects any misconceptions. As a result, pupils are becoming confident mathematicians.

The curriculum for early reading and phonics has been transformed. Leaders have invested in reading books that match the sounds that pupils know. Pupils can read these books fluently. This is helping to build pupils' confidence. Even the youngest

children are getting off to a flying start. This is because their teachers and teaching assistants have ambitious plans to make sure that all children leave Reception Year with secure phonics knowledge. Teachers check that phonics lessons match national curriculum expectations. Pupils enjoy the wide range of other reading books on offer. Adults help pupils to read these books for fun. Pupils are enjoying reading so much that they are learning to love it.

The restrictions caused by COVID-19 have delayed leaders' plans to develop the wider curriculum fully. This is because leaders have strictly limited the number of staff who can meet together. This reduces staff 'bubbles' crossing, and helps to keep staff and pupils safe. Leaders plan to accelerate the development of wider curriculum plans once COVID-19 restrictions are lifted.

Additional support

Local authority officers visited the school in person once COVID-19 restrictions allowed this. They evaluated pupils' work and spoke to pupils to verify leaders' assertions about the progress pupils are making. The local authority brokered the support of national and local leaders of education to train senior and middle leaders. The local authority is now providing training for subject leaders across the wider curriculum.

Staff from the English and mathematics hubs have provided training and support for middle leaders. All staff have been trained in phonics. This is helping to embed consistency in the high-quality teaching of phonics. The mathematics leader has been part of a research group to share best practice and resources within the mathematics hub. Now that mathematics curriculum improvements are embedded, the mathematics leader is moving on to join the hub's 'sustaining development' group.

Evidence

During the inspection, I held meetings with the headteacher, other senior leaders, and pupils. Remote meetings were held with parents of two pupils with SEND, the chair of the governing body and a representative of the local authority, to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection.

I also visited phonics and mathematics lessons, and observed pupils reading to their teacher. I evaluated pupils' work in mathematics, documentation, 40 responses to Parent View and 20 staff responses to our survey of their views.

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

Yours sincerely

Tracey Ralph

Her Majesty's Inspector