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Rohila Nisar
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Dear Mrs Nisar

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Foxdell Junior School

Following my visit with Marc White, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 15 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. We discussed the impact of the pandemic with you and have taken that into account in our 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:

- leaders provide a consistently good quality of education for all pupils across all year groups
- curriculum leaders refine subject plans to allow all pupils to develop their knowledge in the right order so that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education
- leaders embed a phonics programme which supports pupils who struggle with their reading.

Context

This was the first monitoring inspection since the school's section 5 inspection in December 2019. The executive headteacher was absent from school from November 2020, from which time you have been in role as acting headteacher. Since the previous inspection, a new assistant headteacher and a special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) have been appointed. The executive headteacher resigned in June 2021. No teachers have left the school.

In March 2021, the school received an additional remote monitoring inspection led by two HMIs. Inspectors judged that leaders and those responsible for governance were taking effective action to provide education in the current circumstances. However, safeguarding was not effective.

Main findings

Following the previous inspection, school improvement slowed due to the impact of COVID-19. You have continued to make improvements since your appointment in November 2020. Expectations around the school have increased. There is a sense of momentum. Leaders have a strong vision for improvement. They know what is working well and have identified the issues that need to be addressed. Improvement plans are detailed and precise. Leaders review the impact of their actions on a regular basis and amend their strategies accordingly. Staff are united in improving the school.

At the previous inspection, teachers did not have a consistently strong knowledge of some subjects and how to teach them. Leaders have developed curriculum overviews for all subjects in the national curriculum. The plans set out the knowledge and the order in which it is taught in each year group. Due to the restrictions of the pandemic, leaders have not been able to check the impact of the new plans on pupils' progress.

Reading is a priority at the school. Staff have the structures and frameworks they need to plan reading well. The school's arrangements for the teaching of reading continue to improve. Staff continue to develop their knowledge of phonics and how

to teach it well. Leaders plan to introduce a new phonics programme to better support the weaker readers.

The previous inspection identified that leaders were not aware that some classroom provision for pupils with SEND did not always match pupils' ability levels. The new SENCo has a secure understanding of the needs of individual pupils. Staff now have training to ensure that pupils with SEND can access the curriculum. Staff use what they know about individual pupils' needs to provide appropriate activities to help them learn. Children who speak English as an additional language are supported well, which gives them more confidence.

Behaviour around the school is positive. Pupils listen respectfully to each other. Pupils say that they like going to school, that bullying is rare, and if it does happen, teachers help them.

Leaders continue to monitor attendance closely with the support of the education welfare officer. They have worked together to develop a detailed understanding of the individual needs of pupils and their families where attendance is an issue. Leaders provide effective individual support to families to help improve their children's attendance where needed.

The additional monitoring inspection in March 2021 raised serious concerns about safeguarding. Leaders have overhauled their approach to safeguarding. All staff have received safeguarding training and know the signs of abuse and neglect. They know how to report a concern about a pupil. Leaders follow up on concerns about pupils' welfare in a systematic and organised manner. They work with external support, including the police, to help strengthen their information gathering. This helps when seeking support from the local authority.

The chair of governors works closely with you, providing appropriate support and challenge. Governors now ask more challenging questions to check that improvements are being made.

Additional support

Leaders are working with Denbigh Primary School to help improve systems and processes at Foxdell Junior School. Since April 2021, the deputy headteacher from the primary school has provided additional capacity four days a week to support teaching and learning, and behaviour.

The school has made effective use of the extensive support provided by the local authority. Notably, the support to improve safeguarding has led to a substantial improvement. Since March 2021, the local authority has provided safeguarding training for all staff, an audit of the single central register and an audit of the school's systems and processes for safeguarding. The English consultant is working

with leaders to develop the curriculum. The school improvement adviser provides a healthy balance of support and challenge.

Evidence

During the inspection, we held meetings with you, other senior leaders, pupils, staff, and representatives of those responsible for governance. I held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection.

We visited lessons, reviewed a range of documentation and the school's improvement plans. We reviewed 19 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, and the 18 written responses. We considered the 15 responses to Ofsted's 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 Luton. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Stefanie Lipinski-Barltrop
Her Majesty's Inspector