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Andrea Parker
Lead Headteacher
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Dear Ms Parker

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Stockwell Primary School

Following my visit 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 a judgement of requires improvement at its previous section 5 inspection.

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

Since the last inspection, a number of substantive leadership appointments have been made. These include your appointment as the lead headteacher, as well as the head of school and the head of standards for the federation. The school is part of a federation with one other school within the same local authority. Since the last

inspection, the federation has formed a partnership with another local primary school.

Main findings

When the school was last inspected, the head of school was relatively new in post. You were appointed shortly after the last inspection. Since then you have acted quickly to improve and stabilise leadership. Your accurate understanding of the areas for improvement, including the need to grow leadership capacity in the school, has created the right foundations to drive forward timely improvements.

Governors are increasingly more proactive in challenging school leaders to improve the school. Governors know how important communication is. They regularly let parents and carers know about key developments within the school. Parents said that they felt updated about the school's work and that curriculum overviews helped them to support their children's learning at home.

Significant appointments to strengthen leadership capacity have supported school improvement. For example, leaders have appointed subject strategic leads for English, mathematics, science and humanities to work across the federation. These subject strategic leads have delivered training to help curriculum leaders in the school plan and deliver an ambitious curriculum for all pupils.

Curriculum plans show how key knowledge is delivered in stages to help all pupils remember the subject content they have been taught. However, these plans are not consistent across all subjects. Curriculum plans in Spanish do not show well enough how reading, writing and speaking are developed so that pupils know more and remember more over time.

While challenge from governors has improved, governors realise they need more information about the curriculum to hold leaders fully to account. To increase their knowledge of the curriculum, governors have set up new arrangements to link up with subject leaders. It is too early to judge the impact of this work.

Leaders have focused on developing the implementation of the curriculum in lessons. Leaders from the federation have supported this work by leading training for school curriculum leaders. Teachers check pupils' work and develop pupils' understanding. Pupils know that their teachers are there to help them in lessons. However, there are still some inconsistencies in the delivery of the curriculum across the school. Sometimes, teachers' choice of activities does not fully match what they want pupils to learn. Consequently, some pupils do not develop the detailed knowledge that they need to be ready for future learning.

Reading remains a focus for you and your team. Pupils said that they read daily. They could enthusiastically describe the books they were reading for pleasure at home. Leaders have prioritised phonics training for teachers in key stage 2.

Teachers support pupils well in continuing to use phonics to decode unfamiliar words. They also make sure that pupils use their phonics knowledge to help them with spelling. Leaders have developed specialist resources to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities access the same curriculum as their peers.

Subject leaders have focused their attention on developing pupils' vocabulary. Although this work is at an early stage, it is starting to have an impact. For example, pupils were able to recall words like 'monochrome' in art and accurately explain the meaning. In the Nursery class, children confidently used words like 'over' and 'under' to describe movements. In geography, pupils use subject-specific words to help them understand important concepts, for instance tectonic plates. However, subject leaders have not checked whether pupils' vocabulary development is improving in all subjects.

Additional support

You and the leadership team make effective use of subject links within the federation and the partnership. This arrangement has helped to strengthen leadership capacity and contributed to the developments in the curriculum.

The local authority continues to offer a range of support to leaders. This included help in developing the relationship, sex and health education curriculum.

The local authority recently removed the warning letter that was previously issued to governors, in recognition of the improvements made in leadership.

Evidence

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, the head of school, other senior leaders, a representative from the local authority, representatives of those responsible for governance, pupils, curriculum leaders and a group of parents to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection.

I also visited a range of lessons and scrutinised documents provided by the school. These included minutes from governing body meetings, curriculum plans from different subjects and the school development plan. I talked to pupils in classrooms and looked at samples of pupils' work. I looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, including 25 responses from staff.

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

Yours sincerely

Lucy Bruce
Her Majesty's Inspector