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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231  
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Amy Parrott  
Headteacher  
Priory Lane Community School  
Priory Lane  
Scunthorpe  
Lincolnshire  
DN17 1HE

Dear Mrs Parrott

**Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Priory Lane Community School**

Following my visit to your school on 30 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 three 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:

- ensure that there is a clearly defined reading curriculum for pupils in key stage 2, which includes the opportunities to read to adults in school to improve their fluency
- ensure that all curriculum plans set out clearly what pupils should know, and in

what order, and support teachers in implementing these as soon as possible.

## **Context**

The headteacher, deputy headteacher and school business manager are all new appointments this year. There have been significant changes to the governing body since the last inspection. Some governors are new to this role and have yet to access training. The governing body is now co-chaired.

COVID-19 has affected the rate of progress the school has made in some of its priorities for improvement. The school's planned monitoring programme and support for some teachers could not happen because of COVID-19. This is now back on track and the headteacher is committed to securing consistently good teaching across the school.

## **Main findings**

Leaders have started work to improve the curriculum. They have prioritised science, history, art, and design and technology. Leaders have begun to set out clearly what pupils should know and in what order. There are several areas of the curriculum that are not yet planned sufficiently well. Leaders are taking action to implement these plans as soon as possible.

Leaders have considerably developed the science curriculum. Teachers use the school's 'knowledge of the world driver' to revisit science units each week. This indicates that pupils should be building on what they know and remember. However, some pupils were not able to link their recent learning. For example, some Year 6 pupils did not connect learning about classifying materials to an investigation on using materials to filter liquid. Pupils were more confident when transferring knowledge about how to complete an investigation from one science unit to another.

The headteacher identified new subject leaders based on their skills and interests. She has been explicit in defining their responsibilities. This is to ensure consistent practice across the curriculum. Subject leaders have received support from senior leaders to write plans to help teachers know what to teach. Some subject leaders have accessed local school networks and the science leader has joined the STEM ENTHUSE Partnership. This enables subject leaders to share ideas, resources and good practice.

Leaders have acted to ensure that the phonics programme is delivered with consistency across the school. A new phonics leader was appointed in March 2021. She has assessed, tracked and identified pupils who need more support to learn sounds. Leaders have used the COVID-19 catch-up funding to appoint staff to deliver phonics interventions across early years and key stage 1. For pupils in key stage 2 who have secure phonics knowledge, the plans to improve their reading are

less clear. Key stage 2 pupils' reading is not checked as carefully as it is in key stage 1. Some pupils have very limited opportunities to read once they have completed the phonics programme. This is not as well structured as the programme for reading in key stage 1.

Leaders' current improvement plans are not precise enough for everyone to understand and check on what has been achieved. The headteacher is aware that some actions need further detail and clarity to ensure rapid improvement.

Governors have a broad understanding of the school's current priorities. They are positive about welcoming new governors. They see this as an opportunity to distribute governor roles that link to each subject. It is too early to see any impact of this governor challenge within the curriculum.

### **Additional support**

A senior local authority adviser has supported the school. They monitor the effectiveness of the school's actions and feed this back to the governing body. Leaders say that they would appreciate further support and challenge around their current priorities.

### **Evidence**

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

I visited lessons, heard pupils read to a familiar adult, scrutinised the records of checks carried out on staff who work at the school, looked at draft curriculum plans, the school improvement plan and work in pupils' books.

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

Yours sincerely

Alison Stephenson  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**