

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231  
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3 September 2021

Tim Jewitt  
Headteacher  
Snarestone Church of England Primary School  
Main Street  
Snarestone  
Swadlincote  
Derbyshire  
DE12 7DB

Dear Mr Jewitt

**Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Snarestone Church of England 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.**

The school should take further action to:

- design and implement an early years curriculum for both the pre-school setting and the Reception class, so that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education
- establish how and when reading will be taught to pupils beyond phonics.

## **Context**

Since the last full inspection, conducted in March 2020, a new teacher has joined the school and a new chair of the governing body is in post. All members of the governing body have been appointed during the last three years. Since the additional monitoring visit, conducted in March 2021, a new, part-time special educational needs and disabilities coordinator (SENDCo) has taken up post. A new early years leader has been appointed and will take up post from September 2021.

## **Main findings**

Despite recent and ongoing changes to staffing, leaders have worked quickly and systematically to address the weaknesses identified at the last section 8 inspection. They have improved the quality of education at the school. Nevertheless, there is still much work to be done.

Leaders have strengthened the curriculum for pupils in key stages 1 and 2. They have mapped out what pupils will learn in each subject and when. Leaders have thought carefully about the order in which curriculum content is taught. The curriculum is broad and exciting for pupils. Pupils enjoy learning and say that teachers make lessons interesting. Nevertheless, plans do not make clear the main things that pupils should remember over time.

The teaching of phonics has improved. There is a new programme that sets out which sounds pupils will learn and when. Pupils are being taught some sounds earlier in their schooling than they were before. Pupils enjoy phonics lessons. Teachers use hand actions to help pupils remember the sounds that different letter combinations make. Pupils are given lots of opportunities to practise the sounds they are learning. Those that need help to keep up receive support straight away. Pupils are learning and remembering sounds better. However, the new phonics programme is at an early stage of being implemented and some classes have not yet started using it fully.

Pupils in key stage 2 who are finding learning to read difficult are getting more help to catch up. There are more books for them to read. Teachers read with pupils regularly and make sure that they use what they have learned in phonics to help them read unfamiliar words. Adults check that pupils understand what they have read. However, leaders have not planned how pupils' reading skills beyond phonics will be developed over time, such as increasing pupils' vocabulary.

The interim SENDCo is making sure that the right sort of help is in place for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). She makes sure that plans focus on the right things for individual pupils and that help is given quickly. She is at an early stage in checking how well pupils with SEND are remembering what they have been taught.

Children in the early years work cooperatively. They enjoy playing together and adults make good use of the outdoor spaces to support children's development. However, not enough thought has been given to the early years curriculum. Leaders have not considered what pupils will learn and when. There has been little joined-up work between the pre-school setting and the Reception Year class. This means that children have not been prepared well enough for their first full year in school.

Many governors are new or recently appointed. Governors have been appointed according to the skills and experience they can bring to their role. This has resulted in an improving governing body, which has a clearer understanding of the school. It recognises the challenges that remain, such as improving the provision in early years, and has plans in place to tackle these. Governors provide school leaders with an appropriate balance of challenge and support.

### **Additional support**

The school has continued to receive support from the local authority. This has been used to strengthen leadership, improve the curriculum and to improve phonics teaching. The local authority remains ambitious for the school.

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, I held meetings with the headteacher, the senior teacher, safeguarding leaders, a representative of the local authority and two governors to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I also met with the early years leader, the SENDCo, the subject leader for physical education and computing and a group of pupils. I visited lessons and listened to pupils read to adults in school. I looked at documentation in relation to safeguarding as well as the school's plans for improvement. I considered the 19 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 13 free-text responses, and to the 14 staff questionnaires.

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

Yours sincerely

Vic Wilkinson  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**