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Mrs Nicola Kilvington
Carrwood Primary School
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Dear Mrs Kilvington

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Carrwood Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 29 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 2020-21 COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. I discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school 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 all subject leaders fully know and understand the curriculum that they are leading, so that they can monitor progress pupils are making over time, including in the early years

- provide the detail about what teachers should teach in each subject and how this builds on what pupils have been taught in the past.

Context

During the periods of restrictions, governors have been visiting the school less. This means that they have not been able to monitor the progress that leaders are making in the same way.

In some subjects, such as mathematics, teachers are teaching parts of the curriculum that pupils missed while learning remotely. You plan to return to your standard curriculum in all subjects in September.

Since the last inspection there have been significant changes to the leadership team. There is a new head of school. Two new assistant headteachers have been appointed. One is the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) and one is a leader in early years and English. A new mathematics leader started at the school in September 2020. A new governor has joined the governing body.

Main findings

You have stabilised staffing in the school since the last inspection. You have told staff what your expectations are. You have trained staff so they understand these expectations. Staff are clearer in what they are doing. This is helping to improve the quality of education. Parents appreciate this extra stability.

Leaders have improved the teaching of early reading. More pupils can read well. However, you have not rested on your laurels. You know it can still be better. You are currently introducing a new phonics programme. This programme will provide the precisely matched books that pupils need, based on the sounds and words that they are learning. Leaders want teachers to be clearer on what to teach. The plans in your new phonics programme tell teachers exactly what pupils will learn and when.

Leaders are clear on what pupils should learn in English. They want reading and writing to be clearly linked. They have provided clear plans to teachers on how this will be done. In these plans, it is clear how knowledge builds over time. For example, commas are introduced in Year 2. Pupils are taught how to use commas for a basic purpose. This builds through the year groups so that, in Year 6, pupils can use commas for a variety of more complex purposes. Pupils have time to practise their writing. Teachers know what to expect of pupils in each term. Teachers know if pupils are keeping up or not. They provide extra support for pupils who need it.

Leaders have introduced a new mathematics curriculum. This curriculum shows what pupils should learn and when. You have thought carefully about why this curriculum is right for your pupils. It has opportunities for pupils to revisit what they have learned. Teachers build on knowledge pupils already have. This means that pupils are more successful in their new learning.

You have revised your curriculum plans in other subjects. Many of these plans now start from your youngest children in early years. These plans are based on the early years framework and the national curriculum objectives. However, teachers do not have the detail they need, to know what to teach and when in all subjects. They do not know how what they are teaching builds on what pupils have been taught in the past.

Subject leaders do not all have a full understanding of their subject's curriculum. Some do not know what children in the early years should be learning. They do not all know about how the knowledge is sequenced in their subject. This means that some teachers are also unsure. These leaders are not sure how to monitor their subject effectively. Their checks do not consistently focus on what pupils can remember and do.

You have worked closely with families to improve attendance. You have clear processes for checking that pupils are coming to school. You have raised the profile of attendance. Parents and pupils receive awards for good attendance. You have attendance plans for pupils who do not come to school enough. Where needed, staff provide support for families who need help bringing their children to school. Staff prioritise this support for pupils and families who need it most. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are attending school more often. Children in the early years are also starting to attend more often.

During my visit, pupils were calm and polite. They were responsive to their teachers. However, a few pupils told me that teachers do not all manage the behaviour of a few children consistently. Some staff and parents agree. Pupils say that if they tell a teacher, the problem is not always resolved.

Governors know what is happening in the school. They have continued to meet during the periods of restrictions. You and your head of school send them detailed information before they meet. Governors then ask you challenging questions based on this information. Many of these questions are around the quality of education in the school. Some leaders present information to governors so that they can test what you are telling them.

Additional support

You have worked with other local school leaders with expertise in reading. They have supported you in choosing your new phonics programme. You have also linked

with leaders in another school to ensure that vocabulary has been planned into your curriculum. Both links have helped you improve the quality of education.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with the executive headteacher, head of school and other senior leaders, as well as representatives of those responsible for governance and a representative of the local authority to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection.

I met with the leader for mathematics, two leaders for English, the leader of physical education, staff responsible for attendance and the acting SENCo. I spoke to a group of pupils and listened to some pupils read to a familiar adult. I visited two mathematics lessons and the resourced provision (a classroom where some pupils with autism spectrum disorder learn).

I also considered seven free-text responses to Ofsted's online parent questionnaire and 29 staff questionnaire responses.

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

Yours sincerely

Matthew Knox
Her Majesty's Inspector