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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Robert Waiting
Headteacher
Alexandra Primary School
Alexandra Road
Kingston upon Thames
Surrey
KT2 6SE

Dear Mr Waiting

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Alexandra Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 8 July 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 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

At the time of the previous inspection, the school was in the process of expanding from an infant to a primary school. The first cohort of Year 6 pupils left the school in July 2020.

Since the previous inspection, leaders and governors have changed the responsibilities of the senior leadership team. A new deputy headteacher joined the school in September 2020.

Main findings

You, the leadership team and governors are sharply focused on improving pupils' education. Leaders' work is bringing about clear improvements.

Together with senior leaders, you have researched how to ensure that pupils learn and remember essential knowledge in each subject. This has been used to inform your work to develop the delivery of the curriculum, including how well teachers check pupils' recall of previous learning.

Leaders have reviewed and improved their plans for each subject. Teaching of subject content is sequenced to help all pupils learn and remember more. Teachers and subject leaders are working closely together to make sure that curriculum plans are implemented effectively. This includes making sure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive the right support to learn well in all subjects.

Leaders have created a schedule for checking and securing continued improvements in each subject. As a result, some subject plans have already been amended and improved further, and training for staff has been strengthened. In these subjects, this work is making a positive difference to how well pupils understand essential learning. For instance, Year 5 pupils explained how their current learning in science builds on what they learned in previous years. However, there is still more for leaders to do, as not all subjects have been fully reviewed. You are planning to complete work in all subjects by July 2022.

Leaders prioritise reading. They have created new reading spaces in the school, which are helping to promote pupils' enthusiasm for books. Pupils enjoy listening to stories and taking part in reading quizzes. Phonics teaching begins as soon as children start school. Leaders and staff make sure that pupils read books matched closely to the sounds they are learning. Teachers check pupils' progression through the phonics programme. Pupils who fall behind receive additional support to help them catch up. Leaders plan the timing of catch-up sessions carefully so that pupils do not miss important learning in other subjects.

Governors have worked to improve their knowledge so they can support and challenge leaders effectively. They have attended training which has helped them get better at asking the right questions. The governing body was restructured to help governors focus on the quality of education. Governors are assigned to oversee subjects. They meet regularly with subject leaders to review plans and look at pupils' work.

Additional support

You and your team work well with consultants and subject leaders from other schools. This is helping leaders to make sure that subject plans are ambitious and appropriate. The school improvement partner conducts subject reviews alongside leaders and governors. These reviews help governors to improve their knowledge. They also help you and the leadership team to fine-tune your improvement work.

Evidence

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, other senior leaders, five subject 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 and scrutinised documentation. I also examined 93 responses to Ofsted's Parent View and 14 responses to the 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 Kingston upon Thames. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Andrea Bedeau
Her Majesty's Inspector