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15 July 2022

Martin Fenton
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Fenton

Serious weaknesses first monitoring inspection of Wakefield Greenhill Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 15 June 2022, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the outcome and 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 since the school's most recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses in October 2021. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

This was the second routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. I discussed the ongoing 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:

The school continues to be inadequate. Leaders and those responsible for governance are taking effective action towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation.

The school's improvement plan is fit for purpose.

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

Yours sincerely

Andrea Batley
Her Majesty's Inspector

Report on the first monitoring inspection on 15 June 2022

Context

Since the previous inspection, there have been several staff absences due to COVID-19. This has meant that some aspects of school improvement have been slowed. Leaders have recently made changes to some staff responsibilities. At the time of this inspection, a new phonics leader and a new leader for mathematics were in place. The school has very recently employed a new safeguarding and attendance officer.

The school is currently finalising arrangements to become part of Outwood Grange Academies Trust.

This inspection focused on the areas for improvement identified in the previous full inspection in October 2021. The effectiveness of the curriculum for mathematics, geography and early years was scrutinised, in addition to early reading. Consideration was given to how pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported to access the curriculum. Improvements that leaders have made to safeguard pupils and records regarding the safe recruitment of staff were examined. During the inspection, the impact of Wakefield local authority's statement of action to improve the school was also reviewed.

The progress made towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation

Leaders have worked swiftly to address the concerns regarding safeguarding that were highlighted in the previous inspection. They have ensured that timely checks are carried out to ascertain the suitability of adults working in the school. Leaders have also created a single central record of these checks. Staff have received training to ensure that these records are maintained rigorously. Leaders and governors carry out regular checks to ensure that the information on the single central record is accurate.

Following the previous inspection, leaders have ensured that staff are trained in all aspects of safeguarding. Consequently, staff understand more clearly the signs of risk in areas such as peer-on-peer abuse or child criminal exploitation. Staff use recording systems effectively to report any safeguarding concerns. However, designated safeguarding leads do not follow up these concerns rigorously enough. Some reports are not passed on to relevant agencies in a timely manner. This puts pupils at risk. Leaders recognise that this is an area of their work that needs to improve urgently. They have recently appointed a new member of staff to ensure that safeguarding concerns are addressed swiftly and appropriately.

Leaders recognise the importance of improving the curriculum in all subjects. They have sought support from outside agencies, such as Wakefield local authority and local English and mathematics hubs. There is further work to do to ensure that subject leaders are supported to develop the curriculum further in the wider curriculum. This is at the very

earliest stages of implementation. However, all leaders now share the same vision for future success.

Leaders have taken appropriate action to begin to improve the curriculum in all subjects, particularly the teaching of early reading. A new phonics programme has been introduced and some staff have been trained to implement it. Teachers use new resources well to ensure that pupils read words and books that match the sounds they are learning. There is growing confidence, inspired by the new leader for reading, to teach pupils early reading skills. Pupils who are finding reading difficult and pupils with SEND receive extra support. However, this support is not always consistent enough, as staff often move to different classes to cover staff absence. This impacts on the reading progress that some pupils make. There is more to do to ensure that pupils' phonics knowledge is strengthened. There are planned lessons for all pupils to develop reading skills, but not all are given the opportunity to share stories or simply read for pleasure.

Improvements to the mathematics curriculum are evident. The new leader of mathematics is working effectively with outside support agencies to ensure that teachers understand how learning builds across the school. Staff have introduced new teaching approaches, such as short, online maths quizzes, to help develop fluency with number. Work has also started to ensure that learning from early years is strengthened as pupils move up through the school. This is still in the early stages of development. However, teachers are positive about the changes that have been made.

The work to improve the wider curriculum is ongoing. While leaders acted quickly to introduce a new curriculum following the previous inspection, the implementation of it has been delayed through changes in staffing and to leadership responsibilities. Leaders of subjects such as mathematics and geography are enthusiastic. They are keen to make further improvements and gain greater understanding of what is being taught in all year groups. The leader for early years is working with some subject leaders to develop appropriately sequenced curriculum plans, but this is in its infancy. There is also much to do to ensure that teachers are supported to plan lessons that build learning over time.

Leaders have ensured that teachers have been trained to support pupils with SEND and those with specific learning needs. However, the targets on pupils' support plans do not clearly identify the next steps for pupils' learning. Therefore, support for the most vulnerable pupils is not sufficiently effective.

Improvements to the early years provision have also been a focus for leaders. There is a renewed confidence and desire to ensure that pupils' learning builds on learning from their earliest days in the school. Leaders have sought support and expertise from within the local authority and in the local area to develop the curriculum and the learning environment. Staff have received training about interacting and developing talk with children in early years. However, some staff who received training have since been deployed in other classes. As a result, the newly acquired skills and expertise of staff are not being utilised with the appropriate children. This means that expertise is not consistently available to develop pupils' vocabulary and learning.

Governors have used the time since the previous inspection to increase their understanding of their role in school improvement. They are beginning to question the information that leaders provide about improvements to the curriculum. They are identifying ways to assure themselves that it is accurate. There is a growing understanding of their role in holding leaders to account.

Additional support

Leaders acknowledge that the support brokered by the local authority has been invaluable in improving safeguarding. The expertise of the local authority's leaders for SEND has been used well to develop staff's understanding about the variety of needs of pupils with SEND. Leaders have also used external support from English and mathematics teaching hubs to bring about swift improvements to the reading and mathematics curriculums. They know that this support will continue to be needed in the future to further improve these areas. Further support is being sought from Outwood Grange Academies Trust to support wider curriculum development.

Evidence

The inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, other senior leaders and staff to discuss the actions taken since the previous inspection. Meetings were held with representatives of the local authority and with four governors, with one attending by telephone. The inspector met with two groups of pupils from key stage 2 to discuss areas of the curriculum linked to personal development and behaviour. The inspector looked at a variety of documentation, including the local authority's statement of action, and curriculum plans and schemes of work. Documents relating to safeguarding were scrutinised, along with the school's central record of recruitment checks on adults working at the school. Accompanied by leaders, the inspector visited lessons in early reading and other subjects, as well as visiting early years classrooms.