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07 July 2022

Sarah Griffith
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Griffith

Special measures monitoring inspection of Brierley Forest Primary and Nursery School

Following my visit with Kate Mann, Ofsted Inspector (OI), to your school on 5 and 6 July 2022, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the 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 became subject to special measures following the inspection that took place in November 2021. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

This was the second routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. We discussed the ongoing impact of the pandemic with you and have taken that into account in our 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 special measures.

The school's improvement plan is fit for purpose.

The school may appoint early career teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

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

Yours sincerely

Kirsty Norbury
Her Majesty's Inspector

Report on the first monitoring inspection on 05 July and 06 July 2022

Context

Since the school's section 5 inspection in November 2021, there have been a small number of changes to staffing. Two teachers have left the school. Leaders have appointed a new, experienced governor. This governor checks the effectiveness of safeguarding and the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

In March 2022, leaders began the process of consultation with a view to joining Transform Multi-Academy Trust. The Department for Education has brokered a formal agreement for the school to become an academy as part of Transform Trust on 1 September 2022. Leaders have managed the impact of COVID-19 well. The school staffing has been affected by absence. Leaders have overcome this to ensure the development of school priorities continues.

The inspectors focused inspection activities on the actions leaders are taking to address the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection report.

The progress made towards the removal of special measures

Leaders, in consultation with Transform Trust, have identified key areas in the curriculum for improvement. Leaders have clearly prioritised reading and planning the curriculum. They are demonstrating improvements across these areas.

Reading now has a high profile across the school. Leaders have overhauled the reading curriculum. All staff have received appropriate training. They deliver the new phonics programme well. Children begin to learn phonics as soon as they start in the early years. The books that pupils are reading match the sounds that they have learned. More pupils are now reading fluently and with confidence. Leaders identify pupils who may struggle with reading. These pupils receive regular support to help them catch up. Leaders are developing a reading list to include high quality texts and books. They have chosen books that reflect life in today's modern world. Pupils enjoy taking books home to share with an adult.

Leaders have made some progress in developing the curriculum. Leaders have looked more carefully at what needs to be taught in each subject. In some subjects, including art and geography, the plans are well sequenced. Leaders have identified the key knowledge that they want pupils to learn over time. They have developed their subject plans to ensure that pupils can revisit key knowledge and skills. This is helping pupils to know more and remember more. Leaders are reviewing all subjects so that the vital component blocks of knowledge that pupils must learn are well-sequenced.

Subject leaders have developed their knowledge and leadership skills with support from trust leaders. Subject leaders talk positively about the training, professional dialogue and good practice sharing opportunities that are already available. Senior leaders are engaged

in high-quality strategic discussions with the trust about how to make rapid and long-term improvements.

Leaders have put in systems for teachers to assess what pupils know and understand in reading, writing and mathematics. These have helped teachers to determine the next steps in learning for pupils. Leaders have clear plans in place to ensure that there is a consistent approach to assessing what pupils have learned in each subject area. New systems for this will be implemented in September 2022.

Leaders are determined to improve the provision for pupils with SEND across the school. They now understand the need for all pupils with SEND to access their learning alongside their peers. Some pupils do not yet benefit from appropriate adaptations to the curriculum. Not all pupils are being supported to access the curriculum within the classroom.

Leaders have strengthened the culture of safeguarding at the school. There is an improved and shared understanding among all staff. Everyone understands their responsibilities to keep pupils safe. Leaders have improved the monitoring of pupils' well-being, for example through the new weekly meetings. All staff receive regular updates and they are clear about the procedures for reporting safeguarding concerns. The governing body are now making rigorous checks on the effectiveness of leaders' strategies to keep pupils safe. Trust leaders have completed an audit about the effectiveness of safeguarding. They have made suitable recommendations to further tighten procedures for reporting concerns.

Leaders have reviewed the behaviour policy. Some pupils value the rewards they earn and behave well in lessons. Others are not sure how the behaviour systems work. Most pupils say that they feel safe in school. Leaders have clear procedures in place for pupils who find it harder to manage their feelings. Incidents of extreme behaviour have reduced since the last inspection. Leaders take all incidents of bullying seriously. They do not tolerate bullying. Leaders act in an effective and timely manner when incidents occur.

There are now rigorous procedures for checking pupils' attendance in school. Leaders analyse the attendance of all groups of pupils. They have identified pupils who are at risk of developing poor patterns of attendance. Leaders know there is more work to be done to improve the attendance of some pupils. They are working hard to highlight the importance of good attendance to pupils and parents.

Most staff are very supportive of recent changes. They see the impact that revised plans are having for pupils. They feel supported by senior leaders and appreciate how new planning resources support workload.

Additional support

Leaders' early engagement with Transform Trust has been successful. Areas for improvement from the section 5 inspection in November 2022 have been prioritised in the

school's rapid improvement plan. Subject leaders have received helpful support and training which has improved the curriculum in some subjects.

Several leaders from within the trust have been working with the school to support improvements. These include strategic support for leadership, teaching, learning and inclusion. Leaders are receiving coaching. They access professional learning communities for subject leadership, attendance, and assessment.

The local authority has supported school leaders effectively in improving the application of phonics in upper key stage 2.

Evidence

The inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, other senior leaders, a leader from the multi-academy trust, pupils, staff, representatives of those responsible for governance, and a representative of the local authority.