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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



12 September 2022

Miles Elcock
Headteacher
Antingham and Southrepps Primary School
Lower Street
Southrepps
Norwich
Norfolk
NR11 8UG

Dear Mr Elcock

Special measures monitoring inspection of Antingham and Southrepps Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 6 and 7 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 previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the full inspection that took place in January 2020. 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 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 of the school.

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.

Having considered the evidence, I strongly recommend that the school does not seek to appoint early career teachers.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer or equivalent of the Synergy Multi Academy Trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Norfolk. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Steve Mellors
Her Majesty's Inspector

Report on the second monitoring inspection on 6 and 7 July 2022

Context

Since the previous monitoring inspection in July 2021, there have been significant changes in leadership, governance and staff. A new headteacher took up his post in April 2022.

Some teachers have either left the school or are on a planned period of absence. New permanent appointments have been made for the start of the next academic year to teaching and leadership roles.

In September 2021, Synergy Multi Academy Trust became responsible for the school. A new chair was appointed to the local governance board in September 2021.

The progress made towards the removal of special measures

Despite significant changes in leadership, the school has continued to improve the quality of education that pupils receive. Staff are using leaders' curriculum plans to help pupils learn and build their knowledge and understanding over time. However, in some subjects, teachers have struggled to grasp the most important information and concepts that pupils need to learn and remember. The new headteacher has carried out a review of the current curriculum and intends to simplify plans by making connections across subjects more explicit. Greater support is planned to ensure that teachers have appropriate resources to deliver plans effectively. These actions are very new and so the impact of these on improving the quality of education is not evident.

Safeguarding continues to be a high priority for leaders. They ensure that staff are well trained. Regular safeguarding questions keeps adults' knowledge refreshed. They know what to look out for and how to report their concerns. Leaders act promptly in response to any issues raised by staff. This is to ensure that pupils and their families receive the support they need. Leaders maintain detailed records of their actions.

Subject leaders are working with consultants brokered by the trust. This is to improve their role as curriculum leaders. Leaders have a better understanding about how well their subject plans are being implemented. Leaders have started to check carefully what is being taught and that it matches the intentions of the curriculum. It is still too early to see the full impact of how well pupils are learning and remembering what they have been taught.

Where teachers have secure subject knowledge, the curriculum is taught well. However, this is not yet consistent in every subject. This means that pupils do not develop a strong grasp of the things they need to know. Teachers do not consistently check for misconceptions. Gaps in pupils' learning are not readily addressed.

The quality of pupils' writing remains inconsistent. Pupils are developing their range of vocabulary and creativity through their written work. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to practise their skills across the full range of different genres. Some teachers have low expectations of how pupils present their work. They do not ensure that pupils apply their writing skills well in other subjects across the curriculum.

The teaching of early reading is a strength. Staff are well trained in the school's chosen phonics programme. Pupils receive regular sessions, which are tailored to meet their needs. Books are well matched to the sounds that pupils need to practise and know. Pupils who need extra support with reading receive the additional help needed. This helps them to catch up quickly. Older pupils welcome the refurbishment of the school library. They enjoy the bright environment, where they select from a wide range of books. Pupils enjoy the regular story-telling sessions that have been recently introduced. This helps to promote a love of reading.

Staff have received more training to help meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They are now better equipped in knowing how to adapt their teaching to meet the needs of pupils. Pupils' individual plans are clear and identify the support that pupils with SEND need in lessons. This is ensuring that pupils are accessing the same learning as their peers. Additional adults are often well deployed where directions from teachers are precise.

Leaders continue to improve pupils' behaviour in and out of class. All staff understand and follow the whole-school approach to managing pupils' behaviour. Pupils are more attentive, eager to learn and willing to contribute during lessons than in the past. Staff have positive relationships with pupils that help to promote pupils' confidence and attitudes. Pupils consider that behaviour is better. They say that adults deal with any behaviour issues quickly and appropriately. It does not disrupt their learning. As restrictions from the COVID-19 pandemic have eased, leaders have promoted pupils' personal development through providing trips, events and enrichment activities. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to support their understanding of different cultures in modern Britain.

Since the previous monitoring inspection, the trust has made changes to the local governance board. New governors have a range of skills to support their challenge of school leaders. They ask key questions to ensure that leaders are making the right decisions to improve the school. Some of their work has been affected by absence related to COVID-19 and staff changes. This means that they have not been able to complete their intended cycle of checks.

Additional support

The trust has provided stability during this period of significant change. Working with governors, the trust has supported the recruitment of a new substantive headteacher. The trust provides bespoke support for developing and improving practice in the core

subjects of English and mathematics. The trust has brokered the use of an external consultant to support the accuracy of leaders' evaluations of progress.

Evidence

The inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the headteacher, subject leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, the chief executive of the multi-academy trust and the director for primary schools from the trust. The inspector met with representatives of the local governance board, including the chair and vice-chair.

The inspector spoke with parents and carers informally and met with staff and pupils.