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16 February 2023

Katharine Burke  
Executive headteacher  
Parkend Primary School  
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Parkend  
Lydney  
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Dear Mrs Burke

### **Requires improvement monitoring inspection of Parkend Primary School**

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection of your school that took place on Friday 20 January, on behalf of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills. The monitoring inspection was carried out under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005 and took place because the school has received two successive judgements of requires improvement at its previous graded (section 5) inspections.

During the inspection, I discussed with you, other senior leaders, governors and the local authority the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent graded inspection. We discussed the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. I also visited a phonics lesson and early years, met with staff, looked at curriculum documents and pupils' books, checked the single central record and scrutinised safeguarding reports. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

**Parkend Primary School continues to require improvement. Leaders have made progress to improve the school, but more work is necessary for the school to become good.**

The school should take further action to:

- ensure that the curriculum is well-sequenced and fully embedded in every subject; and
- continue to build middle leaders' knowledge and skills to bring about improvement at pace.

## **Main findings**

There has been a change in leadership since the previous inspection. The school now has an executive headteacher and operational headteacher in post. The members of this senior leadership team also oversee another local primary school. They are working effectively to establish a close and mutually beneficial working relationship across all levels. In addition, there has been a significant change to the class structure. Leaders made this change to support the school improvements they are driving forward.

You, along with your operational headteacher, have swiftly identified priorities to address the weaknesses highlighted at the previous inspection. You have introduced a new approach to the teaching of phonics. Staff have been trained and use this knowledge to ensure the new approach is embedded well. They use their increased expertise to support pupils to keep up and catch up. However, this is still in its infancy and younger pupils are not yet wholly familiar with the expectations and strategies to support them in their reading.

The curriculum in other areas has been overhauled. The needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have been well considered in the redesign. You have identified what support staff need to implement the changes effectively. Staff and pupils are positive about the recent changes. They talk about 'Stronger me, Future me, Articulate me, Creative me and Knowing me' knowledgeably. However, this is still in its early stages of development. There is still work to do to ensure that the curriculum is sequenced well for pupils to know more and remember more over time. You are aware of this through your own monitoring and evaluation processes.

You have restructured leadership roles to give clarity for staff in their areas of responsibility. You have developed middle leaders in these roles through a rigorous package of training and support from both internal, led by you and your operational headteacher, and external professionals. In addition to the curriculum improvements, the impact of this is starting to be seen in areas such as safeguarding, early years and for pupils with SEND. Leaders have taken account of the weaknesses from the previous inspection and are making the right decisions to address these. The members of the governing body are knowledgeable about what you have prioritised and the aspects you continue to improve. They understand the important role they have in this journey of school improvement.

You rightly prioritised improvements to the curriculum. However, you have also recognised that other aspects of pupils' development needed enhancing. You have started to address these alongside the curriculum developments. These include developments such as 'Mindful Mondays' with your mental health champions taking a lead role and 'Forest School Fridays'. This is increasing pupils' independence, resilience and preparation for their next steps.

Despite the rapid improvements that you and your staff have undertaken since the previous inspection, staff feel well-supported and valued. They appreciate the support they receive from leaders as well from their partner school. Staff have also benefited from the support from the local authority.

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

Yours sincerely

Leanne Thirlby  
**His Majesty's Inspector**