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Mr Philip Sunter
Headteacher
Batley Parish Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior Infant and Nursery School
Stocks Lane
Batley
West Yorkshire
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Dear Mr Sunter

Requires improvement monitoring inspection of Batley Parish Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior Infant and Nursery School

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection of your school that took place on 4 May 2023, 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 and other senior leaders, governors, the local authority, the Diocese and the chief executive officer of a multi-academy trust 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 reviewed your curriculum, the school's improvement plans, the single central record of pre-employment checks, pupils' work, minutes of governing body meetings and reports from the local authority. I spoke to staff and pupils and visited lessons. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

Batley Parish Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior Infant and Nursery 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:

- refine the curriculum to ensure all subject plans precisely set out the important knowledge that all pupils must learn and regularly monitor the implementation of these plans.

Main findings

Since the last inspection, there have been significant changes to staffing. In April 2022, a new deputy headteacher was appointed. The previous special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) left and an existing member of staff now undertakes this role. They are currently training for the SENCo qualification. The early years leader and the English leader have also left. An existing member of staff has taken the post of early years leader and an English leader has been seconded to the school. In addition, there is a new business support officer in post. Governors are aware of the impact that this has had on the progress that the school has made. You are currently in transition to join a multi-academy trust later this year. During this inspection, I focused on the quality of education.

You have prioritised developing plans in the wider curriculum. During the summer term 2022, you have focused on two subjects, design and technology and art, to initially develop and implement across the school. You are developing stand-alone subjects rather than delivering subjects through a topic-based approach. Some pupils prefer this, as they say it 'makes it clearer what we are learning', particularly pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). You are implementing a published scheme as a base for your curriculum. This sets out the knowledge that you want pupils to know from Year 1 to Year 6. Subject leaders have worked with early years staff to carefully map out how the whole school curriculum builds on what children learn in Nursery and Reception. Teachers access online support to help them deliver lessons.

From September 2022, you have continued to develop other wider curriculum subjects such as geography and history. Subject leaders identify where specific knowledge is repeated within and across year groups. They plan further lessons where it is not. You correctly identify that there is more to do. Some subject plans do not reflect the locality in which pupils live. Furthermore, some plans do not set out in enough detail the knowledge that pupils need to gain.

Subject leaders regularly monitor the delivery of the curriculum through lesson visits, speaking to pupils and teachers and reviewing pupils' work. However, they have not received the appropriate training to enable them to do this effectively. Consequently, they have not identified inconsistencies in the delivery of the curriculum. Where teachers explain concepts with clarity, pupils learn quickly. For example, pupils in key stage 1 know what an atlas is, and they can name the bodies of water around the United Kingdom. In other lessons, such as art, some pupils struggle to explain the techniques that they are using. Their use of subject specific vocabulary is limited.

Identification of pupils with SEND is a strength. The SENCo is well supported by you and the trust. There are now clear systems in place. The SENCo works with staff to help them understand how they can best support pupils with SEND through specific interventions. Staff feel well supported to write and review plans. Your monitoring of interventions shows that they are having a positive impact on pupils' progress. However, you have not fully monitored the impact of this work within lessons. Some teachers do not adapt

learning well enough to ensure pupils with SEND have the support they need. This is the next phase of development for supporting pupils with SEND.

You and the governors have a very clear overview of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. You have an accurate understanding of the progress that the school has made since the last inspection. You are focusing on the right things in the right order. You have prioritised the development of the curriculum and support for pupils with SEND. You know that there is more work to do to ensure that the curriculum is effectively embedded and reflects the needs of the pupils. Your next stage is to develop assessment in the wider curriculum. However, the pace in which you are implementing these changes needs to increase.

The local authority works with you to check the implementation of your curriculum. In addition, they have facilitated external support through the trust, which you are in the process of joining, to help drive improvements in the quality of education. Trust leaders support you and school leaders to secure improvements in planning the provision for pupils with SEND and the wider curriculum. You feel that you have benefited from the support.

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

Yours sincerely

Jenny Thomas
His Majesty's Inspector