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Andrew Waller
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Dear Mr Waller

Requires improvement monitoring inspection of Carr Hill High School

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection of your school that took place on 18 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, including your 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 spoke to subject leaders, discussed your curriculum design and reviewed a sample of work from different year groups and subjects. I spoke to a variety of pupils about their experiences of school life. Furthermore, I examined a range of information, including the school development plan and safeguarding documentation. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

Carr Hill High 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 delivered consistently well across all subjects and key stages
- support the small number of pupils who do not meet the high standards expected of behaviour to improve.

Main findings

Since the previous inspection, there have been changes to the composition of the senior leadership team. You have reviewed the roles of your assistant headteachers. You have appointed some new subject leaders. There have also been changes to the governing body. For example, a new chair of governors has been appointed. You are now seeing the impact of your actions in addressing the areas for improvement that were left at the time of the previous inspection.

You and the governing body have invested in additional training and staffing to better support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This increased capacity has enabled you to focus more closely on improving the quality of education for this group of pupils. You have also ensured that pupils with SEND have access to a wide range of good-quality learning experiences, including enrichment activities. Pupils with SEND are achieving more highly than they have done in the past.

You have taken decisive action to review and improve the curriculum. It is increasingly ambitious. In some subjects, you have redesigned the curriculum from scratch. In other subjects, you have made appropriate modifications to the curriculum that was already in place. You have ensured that staff have a secure understanding of the knowledge that pupils must learn in each subject. You are developing processes to ensure that you check how well the new curriculum is being delivered to all pupils, including those with SEND. Despite these improvements, it is not yet consistently well delivered by all staff.

You have taken effective steps to support staff in selecting the most appropriate activities to deliver new knowledge to pupils. For example, you have provided a range of training to staff about how to adapt the delivery of the curriculum for pupils with additional learning needs. As a result of this action, pupils, including those with SEND, are knowing more and remembering more subject knowledge. Staff are also collaborating effectively in how best to deliver new knowledge to pupils. To do this, you have provided staff with dedicated time to reflect on how they implement the curriculum. You have ensured that staff are fully involved in the changes that are being made to the content of the curriculum.

You have further developed the strategies that were already in place to support pupils who find reading more difficult. You have recruited staff with specific expertise to deliver a phonics programme. The training that you have provided to all staff on phonics is beginning to help pupils to improve their reading knowledge so that they can access the wider curriculum.

You have embedded the behaviour policy that was new at the time of the previous inspection. Added to this, you have taken time to review and refine the processes that staff use to reward and sanction pupils. You have introduced a new anti-bullying policy and you are developing a wider range of ways for pupils to report any concerns that they may have about bullying. Staff are clear about how your behaviour policies should be applied and what the consequences will be for any pupils who do not behave well. You

are also continuing to work with your pupils to ensure that you build their confidence in how you deal with any issues of bullying that are reported.

Pupils were clear that staff's expectations for their behaviour are higher than they were previously. They appreciate your staff's work to secure a better standard of behaviour. Staff and pupils understand the focus that you have put in place to build respect and tolerance between all members of the school. That said, you have identified that there is a small number of pupils who have not yet met your high standards for behaviour. You are working with them on bespoke plans to improve their attitudes towards others in school.

You have taken an outward-facing approach to school improvement. You have engaged with a range of external support, including from a local academy trust and the local authority. You have taken on advice, checked your progress against the areas for improvement and developed an effective relationship with your school improvement partner. These actions have enabled you to improve continually pupils' experiences at school.

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 Lancashire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Elaine Mawson
His Majesty's Inspector