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Andrew Hancox
Headteacher
Scholes (Holmfirth) J & I School
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Dear Mr Hancox

Requires improvement monitoring inspection of Scholes (Holmfirth) J & I School

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection of your school that took place on 8 June 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 judgements of requires improvement at its previous graded (section 5) inspections.

During the inspection, I discussed with you and other senior leaders, staff and governors 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 carried out other activities, including visiting lessons, speaking to subject leaders and meeting with pupils. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

Scholes (Holmfirth) Junior and Infant 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 systems for monitoring to be undertaken by subject leaders are consistent and precisely focused on identifying the areas of pedagogy and practice that teachers need help with to ensure the curriculum is implemented well.

Main findings

Since the last inspection, you were appointed as headteacher. You have quickly and accurately evaluated the areas of the school that need development and ensured that the recommendations from the previous inspection have been rigorously focused on in all school improvement activities.

You have undertaken extensive work on the curriculum, ensuring that there is clarity for teachers on what they teach to pupils and when. Some subjects were initially prioritised for this development and you are aware of the need to ensure that for subjects that are not as clearly defined, this is completed as a matter of urgency.

You have undertaken work to clearly define the early years curriculum. This work is beginning to have an impact on staff's knowledge of how children in early years learn. You have begun to give consideration to how learning in the seven areas of across the early years curriculum progresses throughout the academic year and how this learning will be built on in Year 1 and beyond. You are aware of the need to regularly re-visit and refine the early years curriculum as other subjects in school continue to be developed, so that children's journey of learning from Reception into Year 1 is seamless and prepares them as well as possible for the next stage of their education.

You have introduced some systems for subject leaders to begin to make checks on their subjects. You have given leaders the time they need to check on their subjects. All subject leaders now have an action plan that you use to inform your strategic view of the quality of the school's curriculum. Subject leaders are still developing their understanding of how their monitoring should be structured to ensure that the curriculum is being implemented as successfully as possible. There is not yet the clarity from subject leaders of how the monitoring cycle should give them detailed information that they can act upon to translate their activities into consistent improvements in pedagogy and the experiences of pupils.

You have introduced a new approach to the teaching of personal, social, health and economic education. You know that there is now a more consistent approach to the teaching of these lessons. However, some older pupils still have some gaps in knowledge around protected characteristics and groups of people who could face discrimination and prejudice that will need to be addressed in the short term before they move to secondary school. There is also a need to ensure that monitoring in this subject area carefully highlights areas of the curriculum that pupils are not secure in.

Governors have a clear understanding of the school's improvement priorities. They are beginning to offer strategic challenge in response to your reporting. They are positive about the improvements being made in the school. Governors feel well informed about and connected to the direction the school is moving in. A senior local authority adviser has also supported the school. They work closely with you to ensure that the support they are offering is in line with the school's priorities. Information and outcomes from their visit

are shared with the governing body. Continued support from the local authority will be important to ensure that the improvements made so far are sustained and built upon.

Leaders' current improvement plans are appropriate in continuing to move the school forward.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body and 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

Liam Colclough

His Majesty's Inspector