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20 July 2023

Michael Sullivan  
Headteacher  
Forest Hill School  
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London  
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Dear Mr Sullivan

### **Requires improvement monitoring inspection of Forest Hill School**

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection of your school that took place on 20 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 successive judgements of requires improvement at its previous graded (section 5) inspections.

During the inspection, I discussed with you and other senior leaders, governors and a representative of 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 met with curriculum leaders for mathematics, design and technology and physical education, and with other staff. I visited lessons in science, mathematics, physical education, Spanish and history. I also spoke with pupils and observed breaktime and lunchtime. I looked at safeguarding records, including the single central record. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

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

### **Main findings**

Since the last inspection, you have restructured your senior leadership team and appointed a new leader with responsibility for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

At the time of the last inspection, there were inconsistencies in the quality of curriculum thinking and implementation. Since then, you have acted swiftly to ensure that the curriculum is both ambitious and well sequenced. Pupils can now build up their knowledge and skills in a coherent way, including in mathematics, physical education and design and technology. You are aware that further development of the design and technology curriculum at key stage 3 is needed to provide pupils with a deeper knowledge and understanding of the subject. With regard to the quality of teaching, you have provided teachers with a well-focused programme of professional development. Teachers now use retrieval activities consistently. This is helping pupils to know and remember more. You are aware that a continued focus on developing teachers' pedagogy is essential to improve the quality of education still further. You have also improved the leadership of provision for pupils with SEND. Staff now receive the training they need to support pupils with SEND placed in the school.

Since the last inspection, you have taken a rigorous and intelligent approach to school improvement. You have been supported in this by other leaders and by governors. Governors now take a central role in monitoring progress towards clearly identified improvement priorities. They hold you and other leaders to account effectively. You have also involved staff in the improvement planning process. Staff have responded well and you have ensured that their workload has remained manageable. Your leadership has resulted in greater consistency in the quality of education that pupils experience.

The last inspection also highlighted inconsistencies in the quality of pupils' behaviour, particularly in lessons. You have addressed this by raising expectations and providing pupils with clarity regarding those expectations. Staff are consistent in their application of the new behaviour policy. This has made a significant impact. Pupils now learn without any low-level disruption. They also behave in a calm and sensible manner at breaktimes and lunchtimes.

You have been working with a range of external partners, including the local authority, the Department for Education Behaviour Hub, London South Teaching School Hub, and Whole School SEND. You have valued the contributions that these partners have made to your school improvement work.

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

Yours sincerely

Ian Rawstorne  
**His Majesty's Inspector**