

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



8 September 2023

Katie Evans  
Headteacher  
Hawbush Primary School  
Hawbush Road  
Brierley Hill  
West Midlands  
DY5 3NH

Dear Mrs Evans

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

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection of your school that took place on 19 July 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 from 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 met with some teachers, visited a sample of phonics lessons, spoke to pupils and scrutinised school improvement plans and governor meeting minutes. I looked at a sample of pupils' work and listened to pupils read to a familiar adult. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

**Hawbush 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.**

### **Main findings**

Since the previous inspection, there have been significant changes to leadership. You took up post as acting headteacher in September 2022 and carefully managed a period of considerable change in staffing and in how the school is run. There have also been changes to the governing body, including a new chair of governors.

You, along with your staff, have rightly focused on addressing the areas for improvement previously identified. However, the pace of some of the changes has been slowed by the turbulence experienced by the school. Some of the changes you have implemented have not yet had time to have the intended impact on pupils' attainment.

You have worked closely with providers of external support to ensure that the teaching of phonics is now more consistent. There is some work still to do in ensuring that pupils who find learning to read more challenging receive the very best support to catch up with their peers. However, the pupils I heard read during the inspection did so with enjoyment.

Since the previous inspection, a number of new subject leaders have also been appointed. Leaders are now identifying the key knowledge that they want pupils to learn and the order in which they should learn it. This work is in its infancy and has not yet had the impact you intend. However, you are working with external experts to ensure that subject leaders are supported to continue with this work.

You are also, rightly, focusing your attention on improving pupils' attendance. While your actions are beginning to have a positive impact on reducing the number of days pupils are absent, you are aware that there is more to do. You have recently identified external support to help you continue to improve attendance for your pupils. Your work to ensure parents understand the importance of their children attending school every day is also paying off.

Governors now visit the school often and check leaders' work. Leaders provide governors with clear information, which they are increasingly using to support and challenge the actions being taken. Governors understand the school's priorities for improvement, but also acknowledge that leaders first had to establish a secure base on which to build.

Staff appreciate that you are securing support for their work in school. They also value the additional training they now receive.

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

Yours sincerely

Rachel Henrick  
**His Majesty's Inspector**