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14 September 2023

Matt Whiteley  
Headteacher  
Rowley Hall Primary School  
Windsor Road  
Rowley Regis  
Sandwell  
West Midlands  
B65 9HU

Dear Mr Whiteley

## **Requires improvement monitoring inspection of Rowley Hall Primary School**

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection of your school that took place on 13 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 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 have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

**Rowley Hall 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**

You were appointed as headteacher in January 2023. Since your appointment, you have empowered staff, ensuring that they are fully on board with the improvements being made. Staff are positive and supportive of your plans, and morale is high. You have identified appropriate areas for development for the school and are addressing pockets of inconsistency that remain.

Since the last inspection, leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum, including in English and early years. The knowledge you want pupils to learn is identified and ordered in a logical way. This means that teachers now have the information they need to deliver the curriculum well. Subject and phase leaders know how to monitor their areas of

responsibility. As a result, they are better able to support colleagues and provide further guidance to continue to improve the quality of education for pupils.

Teachers now use assessment information more effectively to adapt teaching for pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). You are continuing to check this to ensure that the use of assessment information is consistent across the whole school. You have also tracked the impact of interventions for pupils with SEND and reading and know that these are supporting pupils' learning effectively. You intend to reduce the number of out-of-class interventions in the future so that pupils with additional needs can spend more time learning alongside their peers, in line with your vision for a truly inclusive school.

You have invested in external support to develop reading for the whole school. This has made reading a school priority and ensured that all staff are expertly trained in delivering or supporting phonics. Older pupils now receive more effective support to catch up if they are struggling to read fluently. The new roles of reading and writing leaders, with responsibility across the whole school, have been effective in ensuring that knowledge of reading and writing builds sequentially from Nursery to Year 6.

You have strengthened leadership by developing your middle leaders, making them more accountable for their phase or subject. You are aware there is work to do to ensure there is the same consistency and expectations across the whole school for all middle leaders.

The governing body has undergone some recent changes that have reduced governors' current expertise, particularly in SEND. However, governors have become more informed about the curriculum. They have benefited from attending the school improvement group meetings, where external professionals have been able to model offering challenge to leaders. Governors are now more effective in how they hold leaders to account. This is helping to improve the school.

You value the support you have had from the local authority and from other external agencies. This has helped you to develop the curriculum and improve the effectiveness of the provision for pupils with SEND and reading. You have made sure that this support is managed well. Staff said that they receive help and their workloads remain manageable.

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

Yours sincerely

Corinne Biddell  
**His Majesty's Inspector**