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Michael Harding
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Harding

Requires improvement monitoring inspection of Vale View Primary School

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 3 November 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 a judgement of requires improvement at its previous graded (section 5) inspections.

The purpose of a monitoring inspection is not to grade the school's overall effectiveness, but to identify and report on the school's progress. It is to highlight to the school, parents and carers any improvements that school leaders have made since the school's previous graded inspection.

During the inspection, I discussed with you and other senior leaders, governors, including the chair of the governing body, 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 visited lessons, observed pupils reading to a familiar adult, met with subject leaders, observed breaktimes and lunchtimes and met with different groups of pupils. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

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:

- embed its approaches to improving pupils' attendance, ensuring that it thoroughly analyses the reasons why some groups of pupils do not attend school regularly.

Main findings

There have been some changes to the membership of the governing body since the previous inspection. For example, a new chair of governors has been appointed. The roles and responsibilities of the governing body have been clarified.

The school has been resolute in drawing up a suitable plan of action to address the areas for improvement identified at the inspection in March 2022. This plan is clear and appropriate. It provides a clear framework to make sure that the right actions are taken at the right time. The plan also ensures that members of the governing body have strong oversight of the school's progress to tackle weaknesses.

There is secure evidence that the school's work to improve the quality of education on offer is bearing fruit. The curriculum has been reviewed. It is now clear what pupils need to learn and when subject content will be taught. Pupils are beginning to build their knowledge securely as they move through the school. Teachers have benefited from effective training and support. This is helping them to deliver the curriculum more successfully. Teachers are checking what pupils have learned more regularly and effectively. As a result, gaps in knowledge are spotted and tackled. Pupils' achievement is improving.

Since the previous inspection, the school has implemented a new phonics programme. There are well-defined milestones for pupils' achievement from the Reception class to Year 2. This helps the school to identify pupils who are not keeping up with their peers. The school uses this information well to provide effective support to pupils for them to catch up on their learning. Overall, staff deliver the phonics programme with improving confidence and expertise.

As well as a focus on early reading, the school has introduced a new approach to developing pupils' comprehension skills. This strategy is giving pupils more opportunities to develop their understanding of the books that they read. As a result, pupils are increasingly enthusiastic about reading and keen to discuss what they have read.

The systems for promoting and monitoring pupils' attendance have improved. The importance of regular attendance has a high priority across the school. Parents now have more information about the impact of pupils being absent. Changes to the staffing structure mean that there is greater capacity to work with parents whose children miss too much of their time in school. Pupils appreciate the rewards and positive recognition that they receive if their attendance improves. However, despite the range of strategies in place to improve attendance, some pupils remain persistently absent. Currently, not enough consideration is given to the main reasons why some pupils are not in school.

The school has successfully revamped the curriculum to support pupils' personal development. As a result, pupils learn about fundamental British values, such as democracy or the rule of law. Pupils have a secure, age-appropriate understanding of many different aspects of equality. They show respect for all members of the school, regardless of any differences.

Governors have responded well to the final area for improvement identified at the last inspection. They have undertaken an external review of governance, which has ensured that governors have a better understanding of their roles, and they are acting more effectively to fulfil their responsibilities. They are using a wider range of evidence to check the work of the school and to offer support and challenge. For example, they ask more pertinent questions about the school's curriculum than they did previously.

The school has made effective use of the support that it has received since the previous inspection. For instance, the support from external consultants has ensured that the curriculum is much more cohesive than it was in the past. Subject leaders are also more skilled and confident in their roles. Recently, the use of external support has reduced considerably. This is because the school's capacity to bring about improvement has strengthened over time.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of governors, the Department for Education's regional director and the director of children's services for Stockport. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Stuart Perkins
His Majesty's Inspector