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Ronni Barker
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Dear Mrs Barker

Serious weaknesses monitoring inspection of Stanley Common C of E Primary School

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 8 and 9 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 was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require serious weaknesses following the graded (section 5) inspection that took place in November 2022.

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 and parents any improvements that school leaders have made since the school's previous graded inspection.

During the inspection, Janis Warren, Ofsted Inspector, and I discussed with you, staff, the chair of the board of governors and the local authority the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent graded inspection. We also spoke with the CEO and the deputy CEO of Derby Diocesan Academy Trust, which has been supporting the school since September 2023. We discussed the curriculums for reading, mathematics, physical education and the early years. We visited lessons, looked at samples of pupils' work and spoke with groups of pupils. The inspection team examined a range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation and school improvement plans. Inspectors also considered documentation relating to safeguarding, behaviour, attendance, special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and governance. I also looked at the record of checks that schools must carry out on adults who work with pupils. The inspection team considered the view of parents from the Ofsted Parent View

survey. We also spoke to parents outside the school. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

Stanley Common C of E Primary School remains inadequate and has serious weaknesses. Leaders have made insufficient progress to improve the school.

The progress made towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation

Since November 2022, there have been significant changes to the leadership at the school. After the previous headteacher left, an interim leadership team was appointed, until you took up your post as executive headteacher in September 2023. There has been turbulence in staffing and governance since the previous inspection too. One teaching post is being filled by a long-term supply teacher. Two other teachers have also resigned, and you are in the process of recruiting to fill these positions. In addition, four governors have stepped down, leaving only two governors on the governing body. You have very recently appointed a new special educational needs coordinator, who works at the school for two days a week.

Following the recent graded inspection, the school has not secured sufficient improvements in the curriculum, the provision for pupils with SEND, safeguarding, or pupils' personal development. This means that the areas identified for improvement by inspectors at the previous inspection are still weaknesses. Since September 2023, you have begun to address these issues with the urgency and rigour they require, but this work is at an early stage.

There is a plan in place to move over to a new phonics programme soon, but there have been no improvements in reading since the last inspection so far. Staff have still not received training in how to teach phonics. Consequently, they do not always choose the most suitable activities to help pupils develop their phonics knowledge. Sometimes, pupils mispronounce letter sounds, and staff do not spot and correct these misconceptions. Staff do not ensure that the books given to all pupils are right for them. Some are too hard, which means these pupils cannot read them on their own. There is not a sequence of learning in place for reading in key stage 2. It is not clear what pupils will learn and when, or how learning in one class prepares pupils for what they will cover in the next class.

Similarly, insufficient action has been taken to improve pupils' mathematics education. Pupils have gaps in their knowledge because staff do not always follow the sequence of learning in the school's chosen mathematics scheme. Staff do not ensure that pupils regularly get to apply their knowledge by completing problem-solving and reasoning activities. This work is sometimes left out because it is considered to be too hard for them. Work is now being done to develop the quality and consistency of teaching in mathematics, but these improvements are in their infancy. Work to develop precise sequences of learning in some foundation subjects has not yet taken place, but there are now clear plans in place to do so. Work has just started on developing the early years provision. Those involved in supporting the school rightly recognise that developing the

quality of education in the early years is a priority. At present, the curriculum in the early years does not meet children's needs well enough.

Pupils with SEND are still not receiving effective support. The individual plans for pupils with SEND are not fit for purpose. Leaders have now put together an action plan to overhaul SEND provision. This plan includes developing the expertise of staff. Leaders have recently reviewed and revised the school's policy and practices for SEND. However, this redevelopment has only just begun.

The local authority's plan for improvement was implemented too late and too slowly, with too few checks to ensure that sufficient headway was being made. Since taking up your post as interim executive headteacher, you have put a new improvement plan in place. This plan is ambitious and comprehensive, but the timescales need to be even sharper so that rapid improvement can now be achieved.

Governors are committed to the school. They want to 'right the ship'. However, there are too few of them for governance to be effective. Those with responsibility for the school must urgently address this lack of capacity so that leaders can be held to account for the quality of pupils' education.

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective. While staff know how to report concerns in accordance with the school's policy, safeguarding records are not always complete. Important details are sometimes missed. Staff have not had training on specific safeguarding issues and risks. This leaves them without the important knowledge and awareness they need to keep pupils safe.

The school is now benefiting from working with a local multi-academy trust. The trust has a good understanding of what the school needs to do to improve and how this will be achieved. However, this support is at an early stage.

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

Yours sincerely

Shaun Carter
His Majesty's Inspector