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Fiona Bennett
Headteacher
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Dear Miss Bennett

Requires improvement monitoring inspection of Hustwaite Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on Friday 24 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 two successive judgements 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 and parents 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, other staff, governors, the local authority and the diocese 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, met the music and English subject leaders and observed pupils reading to a familiar adult. I met several parents before the start of the school day. I evaluated evidence linked to safeguarding procedures and a range of documentation, including the school improvement plan and curriculum subject plans. 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.

Main findings

The school recently elected a new chair of the governing body. A group of senior governors continues to meet you regularly in addition to routine meetings of the governing body. This helps to balance proportionate challenge with supportive checks on your health and well-being.

Leaders have rapidly improved the quality of education. The curriculum for reading is taught consistently well. You have developed 'curriculum manuals' in every subject, identifying the precise knowledge and vocabulary that every pupil needs to learn. You have reorganised teaching groups within mixed-age classes to provide an ambitious age-related curriculum in all year groups. Pupils are achieving well in all core subjects and in all key stages. You are continuing to embed the recently introduced curriculum manuals in wider curriculum subjects.

Your self-evaluation is accurate. You have identified the right school improvement actions in the right order. Leaders review milestones to check the progress and impact of your actions frequently. You maximise the potential for sharing best practice across both schools in the federation. One section of the school improvement plan prioritises staff workload, health and well-being. This helps to ensure that all staff feel cared for and valued.

You monitor pupils' absence rates closely. Pupils' attendance rates are high, and persistent absence is low. Pupils behave well in lessons, and they have positive attitudes to their learning.

You established productive professional dialogue with several external partners. The English hub provided support and resources to help you improve the curriculum offer for early reading and phonics. You took full advantage of the government's 'Trust and school improvement offer'. You valued the bespoke training and guidance provided by curriculum specialists in a multi-academy trust, particularly to develop the early years provision. You are continuing to embed the changes that you have recently introduced in the early years.

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

Yours sincerely

Tracey Ralph
His Majesty's Inspector