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23 February 2024

Lisa Webber  
Headteacher  
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Dear Ms Webber

## **Requires improvement monitoring inspection of Pyrland School**

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 25 January 2024, 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, the chief executive officer (CEO) and other trust executive leaders and trustees 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 the special educational needs coordinator, spent some time observing pupils around the school site, spoke with some pupils and staff and reviewed documentation that you and the trust provided. 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**

Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher has been appointed. In addition, two deputy headteachers, two assistant headteachers, an interim special educational needs coordinator and a number of middle leaders have been appointed. There have also been changes to teaching and support staff.

The school has taken effective action to ensure there is suitable curriculum breadth. The curriculum now identifies the most important knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn and the order in which they do so. There is a strong focus on staff using their professional development to raise the quality of education that pupils receive.

The school has started to make reading a priority. For example, pupils who are in the early stages of learning to read follow a phonics curriculum. The school uses assessment accurately to determine how successfully pupils build their phonics knowledge. However, the reading curriculum more widely is at an early stage of development. More work is needed to establish a rigorous and sequential approach to the teaching of reading to support all pupils to develop their fluency, confidence and enjoyment.

The school has strengthened its understanding of the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders have enhanced the information provided to teachers and check how well pupils' needs are met. However, as improvements are in their early stages, it is too soon to fully evaluate their impact.

The school has prioritised raising attendance and reducing truancy. It has set clear and high expectations for pupils. It proactively seeks to remove the barriers that prevent pupils from attending school regularly. For example, the school has started to identify patterns of absence, including truancy, so that it can target its work to reduce this. There is emerging evidence that this work is starting to impact positively on rates of attendance, but further work is needed.

Trustees and trust leaders share the school's strong ambition to improve. Trustees have strengthened their work to hold leaders to account for the impact of their actions. The trust has provided support to give the school the leadership capacity it needs to focus on making improvements to behaviour, attendance and the quality of education. It has also provided external school improvement support. The school feels well supported and challenged by such external partners. For example, it has valued an external perspective on the quality of the improvements it has made to support pupils with SEND.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, the CEO of the Richard Huish Trust, the director of education for the Diocese of Bath and Wells, the Department for Education's regional director and the director of children's services for Somerset. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

James Oldham  
**His Majesty's Inspector**