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Stephen Bower
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Dear Mr Bower

Requires improvement monitoring inspection of Toll Bar Primary School

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 26 March 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, governors, other staff and a representative from 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 early years, discussed the curriculum and provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), looked at samples of pupils' work, spoke to pupils and reviewed documentation relating to the curriculum, attendance and safeguarding. 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 graded inspection, two staff left the school at the end of autumn term 2023. Two temporary teachers took up post at the beginning of January 2024. The school is currently appointing one new teacher and a new early years leader.

The school's wider curriculum subjects, such as history and art and design, are undergoing a process of transformation. This transformation is underpinned by the ambition of the National Curriculum. You have developed a curriculum that is sequenced and identifies the essential knowledge that you want pupils to learn. The impact of these plans is beginning to be seen in pupils' work. However, you recognise that further refinement is needed around developing the curriculum to take account of a number of pupils who join school late, having had no previous schooling. You are working to effectively address gaps in learning for all pupils, including for pupils with SEND. You have started to put in place consistent assessment practices to ensure pupils have learned the essential knowledge outlined in your school's curriculum plans before moving on. This is at the early stages of implementation.

You are part way through acting on clear, well-informed plans that identify the most important actions required to ensure the necessary improvements in the school. Together with the local authority and governors, you are working on the right priorities for improvement. All leaders have a realistic understanding of the school's strengths and areas for continued development. You have sought and taken on board advice from external sources of expertise, including the Department for Education and a local multi-academy trust.

You are proactive in supporting disadvantaged children to have the best start. In the early years, the environment is beginning to support curriculum implementation. You have focused on developing children's language and communication. The impact of the increased focus on vocabulary from early years, is clear to see across school. The early years curriculum is well sequenced. It shows the small steps children need to take to be ready for learning in Year 1. You are making further refinements to the curriculum to meet the needs of all children, so that activities provide challenge and sustain children's concentration. The ability of children in early years to focus their attention and exercise self-control is developing. Recent staffing changes have impacted on routines. You are working with new staff to re-establish your high expectations.

You are supporting staff well with their workload and the challenges of implementing the new curriculum. Staff morale is positive.

You are working with families to make sure that pupils attend school regularly. This work is beginning to show an improvement in pupils' attendance. In addition, the number of pupils who are persistently absent is reducing.

Governors are knowledgeable about the school's improvement journey so far and the next steps the school needs to take. Governors challenge and support increasingly effectively.

They ensure that the changes that you and your leaders make impact positively on the education that pupils receive. External support from a local academy, the local authority school improvement partner, a Department for Education adviser and an early years specialist provide you with external validation, meaningful support and training.

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

Yours sincerely

Lesley Sullivan
His Majesty's Inspector