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13 May 2024

Mrs Caroline Burden  
Headteacher  
Castleford Townville Infants' School  
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Dear Mrs Burden

### **Requires improvement monitoring inspection of Castleford Townville Infants' School**

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 11 April 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 three 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, other senior leaders and governors 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 spoke with pupils about their reading, met with pupils to discuss their learning and visited a range of geography lessons. In addition, I held discussions with the subject leader for geography and history and the curriculum leader. I met with you to discuss the school's approach to managing behaviour and securing improved attendance. 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:

- identify and teach the most important knowledge that pupils need to learn consistently well across all subjects.
- ensure that the teaching of the curriculum in the early years better equips children with the knowledge and skills that they need in readiness for Year 1.

## **Main findings**

With the support of local trusts, the leadership team has begun to implement a more ambitious curriculum for pupils. There has been a number of changes of staff since the last inspection, particularly in key stage 1. Staff are beginning to receive the support that they need to implement the curriculum. This is more developed in some areas than it is in others.

Some curriculum areas, such as early reading, geography and history, are improving. However, other subjects are in a much earlier stage of development. In these subjects, the most important knowledge that pupils need to learn is not yet clearly set out. Where this knowledge is more clearly identified, for example in history and geography, pupils' learning is more developed.

With your team and with support from a local trust, you are beginning to establish high expectations. Most pupils rise to these expectations. They approach their learning with increasing maturity and resilience. The school's continued focus on early reading and phonics is helping pupils to become fluent readers. Opportunities for pupils to read widely across the curriculum are developing but not securely established.

The work the school and the trust have done to improve the quality of education that pupils receive in key stage 1 is having a positive impact. Pupils are beginning to remember more of their learning. However, there is a different picture in early years. The school has not focused sufficiently on developing a curriculum that provides children with the foundations for future learning. The tasks that adults give children do not enable them to learn in sufficient depth. This reflects an early years curriculum in the earliest stages of development. Leaders have recognised that this is a key priority for improvement.

You and your team have established a highly consistent approach to behaviour and routines throughout the school. Pupils rise to these expectations and show very positive attitudes towards their learning. The behaviour policy is applied consistently by staff. When pupils find it more difficult to manage their own emotions and behaviour, they receive the support that they need. The help provided for these pupils is beginning to have a positive effect. Across school, pupils follow expected routines increasingly well. Your work to secure pupils' attendance in school is also effective. You have established strong relationships with the families that the school serves. This is helping to ensure improved attendance for most pupils.

Although the school is not yet formally part of a trust, trust leaders, alongside school leaders, are providing effective support for the school. Leaders have an accurate picture of the quality of education that pupils receive. Where improvements are identified, changes are made in a sustainable way. School staff are growing in confidence as their knowledge is improving. Governors have a more accurate picture of the school and understand the areas that the school needs to develop further.

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 Wakefield. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Jen Sloan  
**His Majesty's Inspector**