

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



19 June 2024

Ms Lindsay Wakefield
Headteacher
Shaw-cum-Donnington C.E. Primary School
Love Lane
Donnington
Newbury
Berkshire
RG14 2JG

Dear Ms Lindsay Wakefield

Requires improvement monitoring inspection of Shaw-cum-Donnington C.E. Primary School

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 4th June 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 staff, governors, the local authority and the Diocese the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent graded inspection. I also visited lessons and scrutinised relevant documentation. 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, you have become headteacher of the school. Following your appointment, work to improve the school has gathered pace significantly. The school has rightly identified the actions needed to address the next steps from the previous inspection. You have worked hard to ensure that all staff understand the rationale for these actions. Furthermore, you have built a team around you that fully supports the school's improvement journey. In the school, there is a real sense of everyone working together to achieve the same goal.

The school has rightly prioritised improving its arrangements for safeguarding pupils. Safeguarding is effective. You have established a strong culture of vigilance. The school makes rigorous checks to ensure that all adults in the school are safe to work with children. Since the previous inspection, the school has introduced a new system to record safeguarding information. This includes recording concerns that pupils may be at risk of harm. All staff understand this system. They know exactly what they need to do to report any concerns they may have about a pupil. Safeguarding record keeping is thorough. Staff knowledge of their safeguarding responsibilities is secure. This is because regular, high-quality staff training keeps safeguarding high on the school's agenda and ensures that staff' knowledge is appropriate and up to date.

You have shown a clear determination to improve how well teachers check what pupils know and can do. You are in the process of introducing a carefully considered approach to achieve this. Staff have received appropriate training to improve their knowledge of how to support pupils to achieve well. Teachers have a shared understanding of effective teaching strategies. However, there is still some inconsistency in how well these strategies are being implemented. Furthermore, the use of some approaches is still very much in its infancy. You have rightly recognised that these improvements need time to embed. Once established, these developments in teaching should ensure that pupils build their knowledge and understanding effectively and achieve well across the curriculum.

Since the previous inspection, the school has continued to embed its approach to teaching phonics. You have ensured that the weakest readers are identified quickly and supported well to catch up quickly. When learning to read, pupils now read books that match their phonics knowledge. This means that they can practise reading with confidence and fluency. However, there are occasional inconsistencies in how well the school's chosen phonics programme is implemented. You are aware that all staff will benefit from additional high-quality training. This will improve the delivery of your phonics programme further. This additional training is scheduled for early in the new academic year. This timing will ensure that all staff, including those who are joining the school in September, will be trained appropriately to teach phonics well.

The school has a clear aspiration for all pupils to experience a high-quality education and achieve well. You have established a culture of high expectations. All staff and governors have risen to these expectations. They recognise that you value collaborative, joined-up thinking. They have appreciated being involved fully in the school's improvement journey. Governors have worked well with school leaders to support school improvement. They have sought out appropriate training to enable them to carry out their duties well.

The school clearly recognises that the pace of improvement needs to be swift. However, you have also been mindful of staff workload. You have deliberately introduced new approaches to teaching one step at a time so as not to overload staff. This has given them the chance to develop their practice effectively. This approach has been successful in developing a shared understanding across the school. It is already showing some impact on how well pupils are being supported to learn.

The school has received helpful support from a variety of sources. This has enabled you to access relevant and useful training. You have sought appropriate assistance to help you to quality assure the effectiveness of the school's improvement work. Governors have also worked well with external advisers to ensure that they have the required knowledge and skills to hold the school to account effectively.

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

Yours sincerely

Sue Keeling
His Majesty's Inspector