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Daisy Bailey
Headteacher
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Dear Miss Bailey

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Manor Field Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 20 May 2021, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the monitoring inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The monitoring inspection was carried out under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005 and has taken place because the school has received three successive judgements of requires improvement at its previous section 5 inspections.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. I discussed the impact of the pandemic with you and have taken that into account in my evaluation.

Having considered the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time:

Leaders and those responsible for governance are taking effective action in order for the school to become a good school.

Context

A new early years leader was appointed in September 2020.

Main findings

Leaders have developed and introduced a set of carefully designed curriculum plans since the previous monitoring inspection, including in the foundation subjects. These plans are now securely established across the school and provide a reliable framework for teaching. The school's curriculum puts reading at the heart of pupils' learning. High-quality texts are used well to stimulate pupils' interest and to enhance their learning. Staff continue to review and improve pupils' access to books, including for those pupils who have more limited access to books at home.

Leaders acted quickly to address variations in the quality of the teaching of phonics that they identified in the autumn term 2020. Leaders relaunched the school's approach to phonics, identified suitable staff training and reorganised books to ensure that they matched the phonics programme more closely. Unfortunately, the pandemic has delayed training planned for staff, and improvements in the teaching of phonics have taken longer than anticipated to establish in the classrooms. However, leaders are now getting plans for improvement back on track. Training has been rescheduled and suitable plans are in place to check that phonics teaching is consistent across the school.

Leaders have sustained the improvements in mathematics teaching identified at the time of the last monitoring inspection. Mathematics teaching follows a consistent approach throughout the school, including in the use of practical resources such as cubes and number squares, to support pupils' learning. Teachers continue to provide regular opportunities for pupils to refresh and reinforce their mathematical fluency so that they can tackle tasks confidently and accurately.

Leaders have recently updated the school's approach to teaching to ensure greater consistency in curriculum delivery. Teachers are keen to play their part in this initiative and are attending training designed to help staff to adapt to the new approach. Leaders will continue to support and advise teachers as the new approach is developed further.

Leaders have made notable improvements to the quality of support provided for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) during the past year. For example, they have strengthened procedures for identifying pupils with SEND and they have provided guidance for teachers to ensure that staff better understand pupils' needs. As a result, teachers are increasingly knowledgeable about how they can support pupils in the classroom. Leaders rightly recognise that there is more to be done to ensure that pupils with SEND benefit from consistently effective teaching.

Leaders continue to focus on developing subject leadership in the school. Subject leaders are understandably pleased with the part they have played in developing the school's curriculum. They are now keen to extend their roles into monitoring the delivery of the curriculum and checking its impact on pupils' learning. Leaders have

identified appropriate training, along with other activities, to support subject specialists in developing their leadership roles.

Governors are justifiably pleased with improvements in the school since the previous inspection. Their role in challenging leaders has improved and continues to develop. For example, governors recently asked leaders a series of probing questions about pupils' learning in different subjects, leading to better understanding of the quality of education that the school provides. Governors are acutely aware of the need to check further that improvements in the delivery of the curriculum become fully embedded. They have appropriate plans in place to ensure that they can play their part in holding leaders to account as the school continues to improve.

Additional support

Leaders have welcomed the support provided by the local authority and by a national leader of education, who has been commissioned by the local authority to work with the school. The local authority has continued to support the school throughout the pandemic, with a focus on helping leaders to manage COVID-19 procedures and the impact of the pandemic on the school and its families. The local authority is now strengthening its focus on supporting school improvement as the pandemic begins to ease. Support provided by the national leader of education has enabled leaders to develop a secure curriculum framework since the previous inspection and, more recently, to review and update the school's approach to teaching.

Evidence

During the inspection, I held meetings with the headteacher and other senior leaders, representatives of the governing body, members of staff, a local authority representative and a national leader of education to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I also spoke with parents and pupils, visited a number of lessons and observed pupils reading to an adult. I reviewed information on the school's website and considered a range of documentation provided by school leaders.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for West Sussex. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Julie Sackett
Her Majesty's Inspector