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Rebecca Lennon
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Dear Mrs Lennon

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Brighstone Church of England Aided Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 27 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 two 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.

The school should take further action to:

- continue to further adapt planning in history and geography so that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) learn and achieve well.

Context

Since the last inspection, there have been several changes in leadership and governance. A new headteacher, a special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) and a designated safeguarding leader have been appointed. A new chair of governors took up her role in January 2021. Three other new governors have also joined the governing body.

At the time of this inspection, leaders were in the process of interviewing and appointing three new teachers for September 2021.

Main findings

Leaders and governors are passionate that pupils should leave Brighstone having received a well-rounded education. There is a distinct ethos of teamwork and community spirit that inhabits areas of the school's work. Leaders have introduced an interesting and coherent curriculum. It is well organised, ensuring that pupils are taught the essential knowledge they need in the right order. The curriculum ignites pupils' curiosity about the world beyond their immediate community. Pupils typically become well informed about wider topics and events. For example, pupils in Year 3 spoke knowledgeably about the current impact of deforestation on climate change.

The curriculum in both English and mathematics is much improved. In English, leaders have introduced well-chosen texts to underpin pupils' learning. Teachers are now placing a greater emphasis on developing pupils' language and vocabulary across all subjects. As a result, the quality of pupils' writing has improved. In mathematics, all pupils, including those with SEND, have many opportunities to discuss and explain the methods they use to solve mathematical problems. This helps them develop a deeper understanding of the subject.

Provision for pupils with SEND, however, is not yet consistently effective across the curriculum. In subjects such as history and geography, pupils with SEND are not always able to keep up with their learning and achieve as well as they should. This is because the curriculum is not yet adapted effectively enough to meet their needs. Consequently, teachers move learning on too quickly for pupils with SEND. One pupil said, 'We get interested in the topics we learn and then we move on too fast. We would like more time to stick to something.' Leaders have plans in place to address this important issue.

Leaders are determined that all pupils should learn to read as quickly as possible. They have designed the early reading curriculum with precision. Staff are well trained in the teaching of early reading. They check and make sure that all pupils learn to read with fluency and comprehension. The books pupils read help them to practise the sounds they have been taught. Leaders ensure that pupils develop a deep love for reading. Pupils enjoy choosing books from the well-stocked library. Children in early years enjoy listening to the stories adults read to them in class.

One pupil said, 'There is always a new book to choose. We enjoy reading as it helps us relax and learn interesting new words.'

Additional support

Leaders have benefited from the support that Hampshire local authority advisers are providing with the monitoring and review of the curriculum. They are also making good use of ongoing training for subject leaders, the SENCo and all new governors.

Evidence

During the inspection, I met with you, senior leaders, pupils, staff, and several governors, including the chair of the governing body. I held telephone discussions with representatives from Hampshire local authority and the Diocese of Portsmouth.

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

Yours sincerely

Shazia Akram
Her Majesty's Inspector