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29 February 2024

Miss Karen Boardman
Headteacher
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Dear Miss Boardman

Requires improvement monitoring inspection of Saint Barnabas Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 2 February 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, the CEO of the trust that is supporting the school, other senior leaders within school and the trust, and members of the governing body, 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 a number of lessons, including phonics, history and physical education (PE). I looked at pupils' work in their books and spoke with pupils. I visited early years and spoke with children in the setting. I also met with other members of staff. 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

With the support of Pathfinder Multi Academy Trust, the leadership team at Saint Barnabas Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School have begun to implement a more ambitious curriculum for pupils. There have been a number of changes of staff since the last inspection. Staff are beginning to receive the support that they need to implement the curriculum. This is more developed in some areas such as early reading, mathematics and writing. However, other subjects are in the earliest stages of development. The important knowledge that pupils need to learn is not yet clearly set out in these subjects. The way that some subjects are implemented is not yet consistent enough. In history, you have established a well-considered structure for the curriculum. This will form a helpful template for the development of other subjects. It will be important to focus on developing the curriculum in all subjects so that pupils receive a consistently high quality of education.

With your team and with support from the 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 focus on early reading and phonics is paying off. You have rightly prioritised support and training for all staff. Highly effective coaching for staff has ensured that phonics is taught consistently well. This is helping pupils to become fluent and confident readers. The books that pupils read are now matched to the sounds that they know.

The work the school and the trust have done to improve early years is having a positive impact. Children are thriving in their learning and play. Staff have highlighted the important language that they want children to develop. Staff help children to use this language in their play. Widening children's vocabulary is a golden thread that spreads through the early years. Children are resilient in their learning. They stick at things even when challenging. You have prioritised the personal, social and emotional development (PSED) of children. As a result, they work together consistently well and support each other in their learning.

You and your team have established a consistent approach to behaviour. The impact of this work is not yet fully realised. The behaviour policy is applied consistently by staff. Increasingly, staff are using the scripts provided to support pupils that find it more difficult to manage their own behaviour. The help provided for these pupils is having a positive effect. Despite this a minority of pupils sometimes disrupt the learning of others. Your work to secure pupils' attendance in school is more effective than the published data suggests. You have established strong relationships with the families that the school serves. This is helping to ensure good attendance for most pupils.

Although the school is not formally part of the 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, these are made in small steps. This means that changes are sustainable. School staff are growing in confidence as their knowledge is improving. The same is true for pupils. Staff

describe the very 'positive atmosphere' that they work in. They recognise that the trust and the school, 'set them up to succeed'.

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

Yours sincerely

Jen Sloan

His Majesty's Inspector