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Jamie Allen
Head of School
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Dear Mr Allen

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Trafalgar Junior School

Following my visit to your school on 16 June 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:

- complete the implementation of leaders' improvement plans
- enable leaders of the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to integrate their improvement work with that of subject leaders.

Context

The previous headteacher left the school in July 2020. You have taken on the substantive role of head of school. The acting executive headteacher and consultant headteacher work together with you to improve the school. Governors have appointed a headteacher of the federation. She will join the school in September 2021.

Main findings

Following the previous inspection, leaders appointed a curriculum leader to oversee all subjects. You and the leadership team make sure that subject leaders plan in a consistent way. Subject leaders are now clear about how to sequence learning. They have also improved their subject knowledge. As a result, subject leaders are able to help teachers to implement curriculum plans effectively.

Some collaborative work with external subject experts was delayed because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Leaders are now back on track with this improvement work.

Leaders from other schools work with the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator (SENCo) to improve the provision for pupils with SEND. Teachers receive training on how to make sure the curriculum is adapted for these pupils. Leaders also make sure that pupils access suitable support from external therapists. The therapists provide training so that staff know how to help pupils with specific needs. Leaders check that the support which pupils with SEND receive is effective. That said, leaders' work to improve the provision for pupils with SEND is not fully joined up with the work of subject leaders. Some aspects of subject planning do not make clear how pupils with SEND can be supported to learn the curriculum.

You and your team ensure that opportunities for pupils to read and enjoy books are embedded in the timetable. Leaders have purchased resources matched to pupils' reading ability. This is helping pupils to practise and improve their reading. Pupils who struggle with reading are a focus for you and your team. Leaders quickly identify pupils who need additional support with phonics. Currently, staff use different approaches to teach phonics. As a result, the support which pupils receive is sometimes not targeted well. Next term, leaders plan to use a consistent approach to phonics teaching across the school. Leaders are providing training so that all staff will be able to use the new phonics programme confidently.

Leaders' and governors' plans to improve the school are appropriate. Governors meet with leaders regularly to check on progress. They carry out subject reviews alongside school leaders so that they can be sure plans are being implemented effectively. Governors make sure they have the appropriate knowledge to support and challenge you and the leadership team.

Additional support

Support from the consultant headteacher and local authority has led to clear improvements. Subject leaders, in particular, have benefited from this support. They work with external experts to check that their curriculum plans are suitable. The school improvement partner has conducted reviews to check that subjects are delivered effectively. Leaders with responsibility for SEND also received external support and challenge. This has led to improvements in the provision for these pupils.

Evidence

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, other senior leaders, pupils, staff, representatives of those responsible for governance and a representative of the local authority to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection.

I held meetings with subject leaders, visited lessons and scrutinised documents. I examined 186 parent survey responses. I also looked at the 29 responses to the staff survey.

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

Yours sincerely

Andrea Bedeau
Her Majesty's Inspector