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23 June 2021

Wendy Mitcheson  
Broadwood Primary School  
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Dear Mrs Mitcheson

**Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Broadwood Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 25 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:

- identify the important knowledge that pupils need to remember in sequential planning for subjects other than English and mathematics, across all year groups. Leaders should sharpen the recording of this in long-term curriculum plans

- ensure that when planning sequential units of work for subjects other than English and mathematics, leaders identify the end points that they expect pupils to achieve
- provide a consistent approach to how staff model the accurate application of phonics knowledge to writing and spelling and correcting pupils' errors. This includes ensuring correct letter formation in Reception.

## **Context**

Since the previous inspection in March 2019, you joined the school as headteacher, and four temporary teachers have left the school. One parent governor resigned from the governing body.

## **Main findings**

Since your appointment in April 2019, you have set a clear direction for everyone to work towards this school being a good school. This includes ensuring that staff have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Leaders and staff share that ambition and your sense of urgency. You have put in place relevant professional development for all staff. This includes through external support and from leaders of other local schools. You identified actions to take within the school improvement plan. Some of these priorities changed from March 2020 because of the issues that COVID-19 restrictions presented. This resulted in the rate of improvement being slower than you wanted it to be, during the time of partial school closure. Together with other leaders, you check that any changes you make continue to be linked to areas of improvement identified at the previous inspection.

The family support worker works well with parents and carers. Parents are provided with guidance about online safety via newsletters. Pupils understand the messages about staying safe online that they receive in lessons and assemblies. You have ensured that the content of the online safety lessons keep up to date with current technologies and relevant issues.

Leaders, staff and parents say that the school is well led and managed. Staff say that you have built an ethos of strong teamwork and that staff morale is high.

Together with your leaders of English and mathematics, you have strengthened the curriculum for mathematics, reading, phonics, writing and spelling. Leaders are supported through the local English and mathematics hubs. Leaders share a clear line of sight on the knowledge they want pupils to learn term on term, in every year group. Teachers say that you have involved them in training and changes to these subjects. They embraced the training and feel better equipped to teach these subjects.

Since the previous inspection, you have placed high importance on developing early reading and phonics across early years and key stage 1. You now have fidelity to one phonics scheme. Pupils' reading books match their reading abilities. This supports pupils in the earliest stages of reading to be confident readers. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), those who are disadvantaged and pupils who speak English as an additional language. However, in phonics sessions in Reception, and in children's books, adults do not consistently correct children's errors. Sometimes adults do not model a method to help children to apply their phonics knowledge to spell words and form letters.

You have invested in high-quality texts to improve the quality of pupils' reading and writing across the school. English plans build on what pupils already know and can do, term to term and year to year. Leaders check where some pupils have gaps in their knowledge. They are given the chance to revisit some aspects of previous lessons to make sure that they are ready to move to the next stage of learning. Writing in pupils' books shows how pupils are developing their knowledge of vocabulary, grammar and punctuation.

In March 2020, you were in the middle of redesigning your long-term curriculum for subjects other than mathematics and English. The development of these subjects slowed down due to the restrictions of COVID-19. Leaders' project-based design is still under review. Curriculum plans identify what pupils need to learn in each year group. Leaders are in the process of finalising how to order this learning. However, curriculum plans do not highlight the specific knowledge that pupils need to learn from term to term and year to year in every subject. This needs to be in place before leaders can finalise their system to assess how well pupils are learning in subjects other than mathematics and English.

As recommended at the last inspection, you have ensured that teachers plan carefully for pupils with SEND and for those who speak English as an additional language. This includes pupils who attend the enhanced resource provision. The special educational needs coordinator works well with teachers. She has prioritised training for staff and ensures bespoke support through resources, planning and help from adults. Work in these pupils' books shows that the changes made to the curriculum are supporting them with their learning.

Governors check on the effectiveness of actions taken on the school improvement plan, at every governors' meeting. They ask challenging questions about the rate of improving the weaknesses found at the last inspection. They are aware that the completion of curriculum design and assessment systems are a priority for leaders.

### **Additional support**

You appreciate the support you receive from the local authority and your school improvement partner. You work with other head teacher colleagues, and this is helping you to build effective links for you and other leaders. You access support

from the local English and mathematics hubs. This has helped you to improve those subjects since the last inspection. You received technical support through government funding, which helped you to design a remote education package.

## **Evidence**

During the inspection, I held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, subject leaders, the designated safeguarding lead, the family support worker, pupils and staff. I made video calls to the local authority officer and three representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors, to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I evaluated the school improvement plan and spent time reviewing school documentation, including curriculum plans, governing body meeting minutes, local authority reports, newsletters to parents and the school improvement partner notes of visit. I considered 11 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including eight free-text responses, and 20 staff questionnaires. I visited lessons with you and the leader of phonics. I spoke to pupils, scrutinised their work and listened to children read to a familiar adult. I also reviewed the checks that are made on the suitability of adults to work with children. I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Newcastle-upon-Tyne. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Alison Aitchison  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**