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James Williams
Parkside Community Primary School
Tennyson Avenue
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Dear Mr Williams

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Parkside Community Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 17 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 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 the school 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:

- ensure that for every subject, you have carefully sequenced the curriculum to enable pupils to build their knowledge and skills as they progress towards the agreed end points.

Context

Since the last section 5, the Parkside Community Primary School has federated with Garlinge Primary School and Nursery. There is now a single governing body in place across the two schools. The executive headteacher has remained in post. The head of school was appointed in September 2019. This is a small school, with some mixed-age classes. However, as community confidence in the school increases, the school roll continues to expand. This year, leaders separated the Reception and Year 1 classes and appointed a new teacher. From September 2021, Year 2 will become a separate class, and a new teacher has been appointed.

Main findings

Since your last section 5 inspection in June 2019, you have worked with focus to transform the school. You have high expectations for, and of, each pupil. Staff now have a clear understanding of these expectations, as do pupils. You have successfully implemented clear approaches that help all staff to manage behaviour well. You are very clear about the values that you expect pupils to abide by. Staff model these values consistently. This work has led to a dramatic change in pupils' behaviour and attitudes within the school. The pupils that I met with recognise and value these improvements. They told me that behaviour doesn't disrupt their learning anymore.

You are developing a curriculum that reflects your local context and gives your pupils the knowledge and the ambition that they will need in order to succeed in life. In some subjects, your curriculum plans set out the knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn in a clear sequence and teachers understand what pupils have learned previously and what they will be learning next. Other subject areas remain at an earlier stage of development. You have had to adapt your curriculum planning due to COVID-19 (coronavirus) and because you are re-organising your classes as the number of pupils on roll increases.

You are determined that every pupil at your school learns to read fluently. You are providing extra support to every pupil who needs to catch up. Since your additional monitoring inspection in March 2021, you have ensured that all support staff receive additional training to develop their expertise in teaching early reading. You have secured additional phonics training for all teachers, and this is due to take place next week. You have invested in new books for early readers, so that their reading books help them to practise the sounds they have learned. You are working with pupils and their families to raise the profile of reading, and to ensure that all pupils develop a love of reading.

You have implemented a personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme that provides your pupils with the knowledge they need to keep themselves healthy,

safe and prepared for life and work. The pupils I spoke with told me that PSHE had helped them to learn about what healthy relationships are, how to keep their bodies healthy and what they need to be aware of as they grow up.

Since the last section 5 inspection, you have taken action to ensure that all pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils, attend school well. This work has been particularly challenging during the pandemic. Nevertheless, your actions have led to significant improvements in the attendance of a number of pupils. You have recently bought a school minibus. From September, you will be using the minibus as part of your attendance work to bring pupils to school.

Governors, as well as leaders within the school, demonstrate comprehensive understanding of the school's progress and continuing priorities for further development. Governors are actively involved in the life of the school, offering support and challenge to you and your leaders. Through the survey, staff reported that leaders help them to carry out their roles efficiently and effectively. Staff explained that this support is contributing positively to improvements in the quality of education, as well as to the positive atmosphere in school.

Additional support

School improvement work has been supported by the federation of Parkside Community Primary School with Garlinge Primary School and Nursery. The two schools share expertise and have benefitted from working together on curriculum development. You appreciate the support that the school receives from a national leader of education. This support has helped you to raise expectations across the school. The local authority has worked with you to improve the school building and site, including supporting you to develop an area of woodland, which will become a forest school for your pupils. You have also been supported by the local authority to further develop your phonics provision and the curriculum more widely.

Evidence

During the inspection, meetings were held with the executive headteacher and the head of school, pupils, staff, representatives of those responsible for governance, representatives of the local authority to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection.

I also visited lessons, spoke to pupils and reviewed pupils' books. I heard pupils reading to a familiar adult and reviewed their reading records. I reviewed a range of documents, including curriculum planning, school development plans and attendance records. I reviewed the single central register of checks on adults and discussed your recruitment processes with you and the office administrator.

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

Yours sincerely

Alice Roberts
Her Majesty's Inspector