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Jonathan Green
Headteacher
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Naburn
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Dear Mr Green

Special measures monitoring inspection of Naburn Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 14 June 2022, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the 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 since the school's most recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection that took place in December 2021. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

This was the second routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. I discussed the ongoing impact of the pandemic with you and have taken that into account in my evaluation of the school.

Having considered the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time:

The school continues to be inadequate. Leaders and those responsible for governance are taking effective action towards the removal of special measures.

The school's improvement plan is fit for purpose.

The school may not appoint early career teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

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

Yours sincerely

Matthew Knox
Her Majesty's Inspector

Report on the first monitoring inspection on 14 June 2022

Context

Since the section 5 inspection, you have increased your time in the school from two to three days a week. Two teachers have left the school and new staff have come in. With the support of the local authority, a school business manager now works at the school for two days a week and supports the school with safeguarding arrangements.

On this inspection, the inspector focused on the work of leaders and governors to bring in a new curriculum across most subject areas and work to improve the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements.

There have been fluctuations in the school roll since the previous inspection. Many pupils from the Traveller community left the school and have now returned after a period of travelling. This pupil movement, along with a high turnover of staff, disrupted the process of school improvement. The school community is now more settled and the rate of improvement has accelerated.

As a result of low attendance among some pupils and the impact of COVID-19, some pupils have significant gaps in their learning. Leaders have addressed this through some adaptations to the curriculum.

The progress made towards the removal of special measures

You and your governing body have acted purposefully to address the weaknesses in the school from the previous inspection. You have focused on improving the school's curriculum and systems for safeguarding pupils.

You have developed the curriculum in stages. Your initial priority was to focus on English and mathematics. You have then moved on to develop the curriculum in other subjects. These subjects are being refined in readiness for September.

The work to improve the mathematics curriculum has progressed well. Leaders have worked effectively with the mathematics leader from another primary school. You have changed the curriculum to map out the content that teachers need to teach and when. This mapping is helping teachers who are responsible for mixed-age classes as it ensures that all pupils are taught age-appropriate content.

This new curriculum is helping pupils to build up their mathematical knowledge and skills step by step. Pupils use resources such as objects to count or place-value grids to help them understand number. This is particularly helpful for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities or pupils with significant gaps in their knowledge. You recognise that for this curriculum to be successful, all teachers should follow it as intended. This is not currently the case.

Leaders have mapped out the curriculum in subjects such as history and geography. They are currently trialling curriculum plans. They are making ongoing changes in response to what is working and what needs to further improve.

Leaders are also in the process of introducing a new phonics scheme. To do this, they are working with a local specialist in English for advice. At the same time, leaders have trained key stage 2 staff in how to assess pupils with gaps in their phonics knowledge. These pupils then receive regular, often daily, support with their reading.

Leaders have introduced a new personal, social and health education curriculum. This new curriculum addresses the much-needed aspects of personal development that pupils need to learn about. This curriculum covers important areas such as forming healthy relationships and learning about respecting others. As with other subjects, this new curriculum is at an early stage of implementation. Leaders plan for all teachers to follow it as intended from September.

There are now much more robust systems in place for safeguarding. Leaders have made sure that the school's single central record is now fully accurate and that all staff and governors are recorded on it. Leaders have also ensured that all school volunteers undergo a full vetting and checking process. Leaders have trained staff working in the office to understand what to do when someone visits the school. The new safeguarding policy contains all recent updates that staff need to know about. Leaders have trained staff on these updates.

However, owing to the recent high turnover of staff, there are gaps in staff knowledge about safeguarding. For example, some staff are not clear about the specific signs to look out for to consider whether pupils are at risk of criminal exploitation. More pressingly, some staff do not know how to use the new safeguarding recording system. This means that all concerns must be taken to you, despite you not being in school for two days a week. You recognise the urgent need to train staff in this system and to ensure that all staff have specific safeguarding knowledge to help them keep pupils safe. You also recognise the need to train more safeguarding deputies to ensure that any concerns are dealt with in your absence.

You have brought in rewards and systems to help raise the profile of attendance. Staff keep a close eye on pupils whose attendance is causing concern. You have thought of different ways of contacting some of the parents and carers of these pupils, such as recording videos explaining the importance of attendance or catching parents at the start of the school day. These actions are contributing to some small improvements in attendance. You plan to do more to improve the attendance of specific pupils and to evaluate the impact of what you have done.

Governors are heavily involved in the improvement planning of the school. They have formed a rapid improvement group that focuses on the areas for improvement from the previous inspection. This group has worked with you to create sensible and clear milestones that need to be met to keep on track with the pace of change that you want.

Governors know that there is much to do, but are clear about how to prioritise what is needed most.

Staff are on board with the changes that are needed. Although some staff have left the school, new staff are clear about what needs to be done. Staff are keen to try out the new curriculum. You have provided them with training to help them to apply the curriculum in the classroom. Everyone is pulling in the same direction.

You recognise that for the new curriculum to be successful, staff will need to support you in checking its implementation and making any changes that are needed. As many staff are so new, this has been difficult to achieve. You are considering ways of distributing leadership in a measured and effective manner.

Priorities for further improvement

- The curriculum is mostly new and some staff are currently not teaching it as it is intended. Some pupils are not keeping up with the curriculum. Leaders need to monitor this to check that all teachers are following the intended curriculum and that pupils are getting the teaching and support that they need in order to gain knowledge and skills in all subjects.

Additional support

Leaders have used additional support well. Leaders have worked with a local primary school to develop the curriculum in mathematics and across other subjects. Leaders have also worked with this school on other parts of the curriculum and trained staff in how to use it.

You have used specialist support from the local authority effectively. This support has helped important aspects of the school's work, including attendance, safeguarding and early years. You have aligned this support with key priorities in the school improvement plan.

Representatives from the local authority and the diocese have joined governor meetings. Governors ask informed questions and have regular updates on visits and on the additional support that you are receiving. Governors use the notes of visits and information from representatives to check that your actions are bringing about the improvement needed. This is helping the coherence of the support that the school receives and the scrutiny that governors are providing.

Evidence

The inspector observed the school's work and scrutinised documents. He met with the headteacher, teachers, teaching assistants and office staff. He also met members of the governing body. The inspector talked to a representative from the City of York local

authority, a representative from the Diocese of York and a leader providing support to the school.