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Maria Budd
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Budd

Requires improvement monitoring inspection of Carrant Brook Junior School

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection of your school that took place on 24 March 2023, 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.

During the inspection, I discussed with you and other leaders, staff, governors and the local authority 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 lessons, reviewed pupils' work, talked to pupils in lessons and around school, and scrutinised curriculum documents and the school's development and monitoring plans. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

Carrant Brook Junior School continues to require improvement. Leaders have made progress to improve the school, but more work is necessary for the school to become good.

The school should take further action to:

- ensure that the school's approaches to implementing the curriculum, including designing tasks, enable all pupils to reach suitably ambitious curriculum goals in every subject, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Main findings

Since the previous inspection, the school has reduced from seven to six classes. One governor has left and another governor has joined. There have been no changes to teaching staff.

You and your staff are working steadily to bring about the necessary changes to the curriculum. There is a new systematic synthetic phonics programme in place. Teaching is addressing gaps in pupils' phonic knowledge head-on. Pupils have lots of practice to build their reading fluency and to apply phonics to spell accurately. Leaders' recent work to enhance staff's knowledge of teaching pupils with SEND so that teaching builds firmly on what these pupils already know is well underway. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, staff are shaping the curriculum to improve the quality of pupils' writing.

Subject leaders' work to identify the essential knowledge pupils need to learn in every subject is paying off. As a result, staff know what pupils need to learn and in what order. Increased training opportunities are helping staff to apply effective teaching approaches to specific subjects. Where subject curriculums are more established, for example in science and computing, pupils speak with knowledge and enthusiasm, and remember a wealth of subject content. However, in a few subject curriculums, the agreed curriculum goals are not sufficiently ambitious. Leaders are beginning to address this, but it is early days.

Governors check leaders' work against the intended actions on the school improvement plan. You use the advice and support you receive from the local authority productively. For example, subject leaders are now better equipped to check teachers' delivery of the curriculum in their subjects. This is beginning to help you and governors evaluate the impact of the school-wide curriculum over time. However, some of this work is recent. As a result, some inconsistencies in the implementation and impact of the curriculum remain.

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

Yours sincerely

Julie Carrington
His Majesty's Inspector