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17 June 2021

Claire Collett  
Executive Headteacher  
Swineshead St Mary's Church of England Primary School  
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Dear Mrs Collett

**Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Swineshead St Mary's Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 8 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 three 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:

- ensure that the teaching of early reading and phonics enables pupils to read with fluency and accuracy.

## **Context**

All staff and pupils returned to school on 8 March 2021, when schools reopened to all pupils.

Leaders and governors have taken account of the impact of COVID-19 when planning school improvement. Governors have conducted their monitoring visits remotely.

## **Main findings**

Leaders have worked quickly and systematically to address the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Their key priority has been to revise the curriculum. Leaders have ensured that the curriculum now sets out what pupils should know in all subjects, from early years to Year 6. The curriculum plans contain specific links with previous and future learning. Leaders recognise that pupils benefit from revisiting what they have been taught so that pupils know and remember more as they progress through the school.

Curriculum leaders and staff have received thorough training to deliver the revised curriculum. Leaders ensure that teachers' subject knowledge is kept up to date. Since all pupils returned to school, leaders and staff have resumed their regular checks on the impact of the curriculum on pupils' learning. This helps them to identify quickly what pupils know and remember, and to plan the next steps.

In my discussions with pupils, we spoke about what they were currently learning in mathematics. They described how they have applied what they already knew about shapes and measurements when calculating the volume of a container. Their strong recall helps them to approach new, challenging concepts with confidence. The work in pupils' books confirms that lessons flow in a logical sequence. This allows pupils to build a store of knowledge over time.

Leaders are in the process of reviewing their approach to the teaching of early reading and phonics. Currently, pupils do not make a strong enough start in learning to read. When I observed pupils reading to a familiar adult, they could not consistently apply their phonics knowledge when reading unfamiliar words. The books were not always well matched to pupils' needs.

Since the last inspection, leaders have worked with parents to improve pupils' attendance. This has had a positive impact. Rates of persistent absence have fallen significantly and are now below the national average.

Leaders and governors have demonstrated strong capacity for driving improvement. They have set out appropriate plans for the next steps towards the school becoming good.

## **Additional support**

The local authority has provided a regular programme of support and training for the school. Leaders have used this support to develop the curriculum and staff expertise. The local authority plans to provide further support to improve early reading and phonics.

## **Evidence**

During the inspection, I held meetings with the executive headteacher, the head of school, curriculum leaders, pupils, staff, the chair of governors and a representative of the local authority to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection.

I visited lessons and observed pupils reading to a member of staff. I reviewed documents relating to the curriculum, safeguarding and attendance. I reviewed responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including five free-text responses, and 24 staff questionnaires.

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

Yours sincerely

Christine Watkins  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**