

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



22 April 2025

Cathy Gibson
Head of School
Birley Spa Primary Academy
Jermyn Crescent
Hackenthorpe
Sheffield
South Yorkshire
S12 4QE

Dear Ms Gibson

Monitoring inspection of a school not in a category of concern of Birley Spa Primary Academy

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 5 March 2025, 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 meets the monitoring threshold as set out in the [Monitoring Inspection Handbook](#).

The purpose of a monitoring inspection is not to grade the school's key and (where applicable) provision judgements, but to identify and report on the school's progress. It is to highlight to the school and parents any improvements that school leaders have made since the school's previous graded inspection.

During the inspection, I discussed with you and other leaders, including the school's executive headteacher, the director of schools (primary), the deputy chief executive officer of the trust and members of the academy governing board 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 spoke with subject leaders and members of staff and pupils, visited lessons and looked at pupils' work. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

Leaders have made progress to improve the school, but some aspects of the school need further improvement.

The school should take further action to:

- Ensure that improvements in the curriculum are implemented consistently well across all subjects. In particular, the school should ensure that those new to subject leadership have the opportunity to develop and share their expertise. This will help them to build a clearer understanding of how well pupils are learning subject curriculums and provide necessary support where this is less secure.

Main findings

At the time of the last inspection, you were relatively new to the school. Since this time, steps have been taken to address the key areas for improvement identified at that inspection. Two new assistant headteachers, with responsibility for teaching and learning, and a new special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator have been appointed to complement the school's leadership team. Most recently, following the redesign of the school's wider curriculum offer, a number of staff have been appointed as subject leaders.

You and other leaders have implemented a new curriculum across the full range of national curriculum subjects. This curriculum provides your new subject leaders and teachers with clear guidance on curriculum content, sequences of learning and lesson structure. The curriculum places an emphasis on pupils being able to build on prior learning and develop new vocabulary. Your checks on the implementation of the curriculum suggest that pupils' ability to retain important knowledge is increasing. My lesson visits with your staff indicated that improvements are gaining some traction. Pupils are showing signs that they can place new learning in context. Staff appreciate the clear expectations of your new approach.

You are continuing to work on the implementation of the new curriculum alongside new and more experienced subject leaders. You are keen to ensure that all staff develop the skills which they need to lead their subjects most effectively.

The changes you are making were still in the relatively early stages of development in summer 2024 and did not have time to improve outcomes for pupils at the end of key stage 2. For these pupils, outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics were significantly below those seen nationally. Current pupils are benefitting from the improvements that you are making. There are many signs that they are producing better quality work than before.

The trust and academy governing board are supporting the school's progress. They hold you and the other school leaders to account for the actions taken. They provide helpful opportunities for collaboration and challenge. Their work is informing decisions on how to further improve the education and care of all pupils.

You are building culture of devolved leadership, high expectations and inclusion. There are increasing signs of a busy and gainful school environment. I observed many occasions where pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, were engaged in learning and eager to make positive contributions. Pupils are increasingly mindful of the school's high expectations.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees and the CEO of the L.E.A.D. Multi-Academy trust, the Department for Education's regional director and the director of children's services for Sheffield. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Marcus Newby
His Majesty's Inspector