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Moira Green
Executive Principal
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Dear Ms Green

Requires improvement monitoring inspection of Bournville School

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection of your school that took place on 15 September 2022, 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 the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent graded inspection with you, other senior leaders, the CEO of the multi-academy trust and governors. We discussed the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. I also spoke to the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) and subject leaders of mathematics and English, met with trust staff, visited lessons, spoke to pupils, looked at books and scrutinised policies and school documents. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

Bournville 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 in all subjects across the school, leaders have identified the component knowledge that pupils need to know to build their learning well over time
- further support teachers' subject pedagogy through a systematic approach to subject-specific professional development.

Main findings

Since the previous inspection, additional capacity has been introduced to the leadership team. There is now a substantive head of primary phase and a substantive SENCo. You are now working across two schools and a member of the trust's central team is supporting the school as acting head of school.

You want the very best for pupils at the school. Staff share your ambition. Leaders are clear about the improvements that need to be made. Work with trust leaders is helping to make sure that all plans are focused on the actions that will make the biggest difference.

You have begun to address the variability that exists in the way that the curriculum is implemented. You have introduced consistent lesson structures and all teachers are now using these to design lessons to support pupils' learning. In some subjects, leaders have identified the important knowledge that pupils need to gain, and this is sequenced well. However, this is not evident in all subjects or in all key stages of the curriculum. Leaders have spent time developing lesson structures, but less on helping teachers to build their understanding of how to teach their subject well. There is therefore still variability in how well important information is taught. Leaders have not always made sure that assessment is sufficiently focused on what pupils need to know to help them to build their learning over time. This means that teachers are not able to take swift action to rectify gaps in pupils' learning.

Leaders are now using trust systems to support early the identification of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). As a result, pupils with high levels of needs are beginning to get the help that they need. Leaders are now focusing on making sure that all pupils with SEND receive the help they need and that teachers are equipped to support these pupils well. These plans are at an early stage.

Leaders have taken decisive action to tackle low-level disruption and pupils' attitudes to learning. There is a systematic plan in place to ensure that pupils' behaviour reflects the high expectations of the school. You have introduced additional support for pupils who do not behave well. These actions have led to a decrease in the number of suspensions. However, pupils say that disruption to learning is still too frequent, although they agree that behaviour is improving. All leaders understand the importance of good parental engagement, and work to develop more positive relationships with parents is evident in all areas of the school. A small number of parents spoken to, however, still have negative attitudes towards the school.

The trust provides a high level of targeted support for leadership development, the provision for pupils with SEND and for behaviour and attendance. This work is beginning to have an impact, although there is still more work to do. Governors know the school well. They provide you with appropriate support and challenge. This is helping to drive improvements in the school.

The school has received help from the Department for Education behaviour hub. You value this support and say that this has helped leaders to implement clear behaviour systems.

I am copying this letter to the board of trustees and the CEO of the Fairfax Multi-Academy Trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Birmingham. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Claire Price
His Majesty's Inspector