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Jespy Pereira-Barker
Head of School
Millbrook School
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Dear Mrs Jespy Pereira-Barker

Monitoring inspection of a school not in a category of concern of Millbrook School

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 26 November 2024, 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 the executive headteacher, other senior leaders, 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 carried out visits to lessons across the school, met with staff, spoke to pupils, looked at pupils' work and reviewed safeguarding documentation. I looked at the latest governor minutes, the school's development plan and notes of visits from the local authority. 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:

- Provide staff with tailored support on how to adapt teaching to successfully fill specific gaps in pupils' knowledge within their class.
- Ensure that the work set for all pupils is well matched to needs, especially for pupils with English as an additional language.
- Check that pupils are learning the new curriculum content in the detail intended and are secure in this knowledge before learning something new.

Main findings

Since the last inspection, the school has joined a federation with another local school. There is now an executive headteacher who is also responsible for this school, along with yourself as head of school. The federation is overseen by one newly formed joint governing board. As a federation, you are taking the right actions to improve the quality of education at this school. You have also secured a stable staff team, which is supportive of the improvements being made and keen to do well.

The school has ensured that there are now suitable adaptations in place for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to access the curriculum. It has acted quickly to ensure that staff know the recently updated curriculum expectations. Leaders, however, recognise that these changes are still in their infancy. This means that staff are still getting used to the new curriculum detail and how to check that pupils can recall this. Staff have also received guidance on the most successful ways to fill gaps in pupils' knowledge. There are early signs of this having a positive impact on pupils' achievement, especially in mathematics and reading. However, there are still occasions where teaching is still not being sufficiently adapted for the specific needs within the class. Therefore, missed opportunities remain to secure or extend pupils' knowledge. This includes in writing. Leaders accept they need to provide further bespoke support to address this, yet in a way that is also manageable for staff. This includes how best to support the increasing number of pupils attending the school who arrive speaking little or no English.

The newly formed federation's governing board is ambitious for the school. Governors have quickly established systems and processes to ensure that they fulfil their statutory duties and hold leaders to account. They have the required knowledge to provide challenge and support. Governors have enabled an effective sharing of staff expertise and resources from within the federation. Staff are benefiting from this joint professional development. Staff also know that their views on well-being are listened to during this period of change. The federation is still in its early stages. However, it has already strengthened the leadership capacity and strategic oversight of the school.

Pupils continue to behave well. They have trust in adults to help them. The school provides them with the knowledge to stay safe. Pupils like the new topics they are learning about and the recent curriculum changes.

You and other leaders appreciate the guidance from the local authority. You have found it supportive when setting up the federation and in providing necessary resources. Staff

have found the training and advice offered by the local authority advisers about the curriculum to have benefited their practice. Governors also value the external challenge the local authority provides.

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

Yours sincerely

Sara Boyce
His Majesty's Inspector