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3 July 2025

Kellie Halliday
Principal
Hovingham Primary School
Hovingham Avenue
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Dear Mrs Halliday

Monitoring inspection of a school not in a category of concern of Hovingham Primary School

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 5 June 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, other senior leaders 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 and listened to some pupils read. I held meetings with staff and pupils and reviewed school documents, including the school improvement plan and curriculum information. I looked at safeguarding records and the single central record. 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.

Main findings

Within the last year, the capacity of the leadership team has been increased. The school has been receiving support from Owlcotes Multi Academy Trust since the last inspection with the intention to join the trust in the future.

The newly established leadership team is bringing energy and rigour to its roles. You and your team are making regular checks on the quality of education pupils receive. Pupils' assessment information is now being used to inform teaching with increasing precision. As a result, the tasks pupils complete are more closely matched to intended learning outcomes. Over the last year, the school has made changes to the curriculum. This curriculum maps out more clearly the important vocabulary that pupils need to learn. There is greater consistency to how the curriculum is taught, such as building in more opportunities to recap on pupils' prior learning. This work is showing emerging signs of impact in subjects, such as English and mathematics. The school has plans in place to broaden these approaches into other curriculum areas.

Since September, you have introduced a 'start-up, catch-up and keep-up approach'. This aims to address gaps in pupils' learning caused by the high level of pupil mobility within the school community. Start-up classes are provided for pupils who join the school mid-year, often with very limited English or experience of school. These classes help to address pupils' knowledge gaps by offering a unique curriculum matched closely to their needs. Reading remains a high priority for the school. Pupils are increasingly using their phonics knowledge to make accurate spelling choices. Recent changes have been made to the early years curriculum to prioritise children's reading and language skills. However, you recognise that further work remains to be done to ensure that phonics is delivered consistently well. The school has introduced a handwriting programme to address the issue that was identified at the last inspection. Handwriting is now taught regularly, and this is supporting pupils' handwriting to improve. Pupils complete daily dictation exercises, which help them to practise grammar, spelling and punctuation.

Governors are supportive of the school. They make visits to see the impact of the school's work in action. They receive regular and detailed reports from school leaders and Owlcotes trust. This gives them a better understanding of the progress the school is making. They are aware that work remains to be done and are optimistic for the school's future.

The school is benefitting from the support provided by the trust. The ongoing self-review processes are giving the school a detailed understanding of the impact of the actions that have been taken. As a result, school improvement plans are appropriately targeted on the next steps to secure further improvement. The ongoing professional development that staff have received is closely linked to the school's key improvement priorities. The senior leadership team has benefited from how the trust has increased its knowledge and expertise.

The actions taken to date are supporting the improvement process. Staff are appreciative of the professional development they have received and feel that a culture of increasingly high expectations is being built. The expansion of the leadership team has supported you to maintain a focus on school improvement actions. The school is taking the right actions in a timely way.

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 Leeds local authority. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Chris Pearce
His Majesty's Inspector