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Joanne Harrington
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Dear Miss Harrington

Monitoring inspection of a school not in a category of concern of St Paul's Church of England Primary School Brinnington

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 28 January 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 senior leaders, governors, the local authority and the diocese 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, looked at examples of pupils' work, met with pupils and staff and reviewed a range of documents. 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:

- refine the curriculum and the arrangements to assess pupils' understanding in some subjects so that there is a greater focus on the key knowledge that pupils need for future learning
- strengthen work with the parents and carers of some younger pupils at the school to help reduce the rates of persistent absence.

Main findings

The school has responded well to the areas for improvement left at the previous inspection. It has put in place a clear curriculum so that all staff know and understand what is being taught in each subject. For example, the curriculum in geography builds on pupils' prior knowledge well. It is clear about how the small steps in learning build towards a greater understanding of the subject. As a result, pupils are demonstrating a better recall of their prior learning.

The school has taken effective action to put in place a wealth of opportunities to help pupils to remember key aspects of their learning. Teachers use this information to reshape the way in which they teach pupils' next steps in learning. However, the arrangements to refine and assess the curriculum are not as well developed in some subjects. Although subject leaders have clear actions in place to address this issue, the curriculum in these subjects is not currently clear enough about the essential knowledge that pupils need for their future learning. Although pupils do remember more of the curriculum, this is not consistently the most important content.

The school has taken comprehensive steps to ensure that there is a consistent approach to developing pupils' reading knowledge throughout the school. In key stage 1, pupils who have fallen behind the intended curriculum are supported well to gain a strong grasp of phonics so that they start to read with greater fluency and expression as they progress from one year to the next. In key stage 2, teachers have been supported well to enhance the way in which they develop pupils' understanding of vocabulary and their comprehension skills. This is effective in ensuring that pupils' reading knowledge helps them to enjoy and understand a wide range of texts.

Leaders have brought about many positive changes to the quality of pupils' education to address effectively the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. As a result, teachers and pupils demonstrate a better understanding of the curriculum. Staff are positive about the direction that the school is taking. The teachers who shared their views remarked that they felt well supported by leaders.

Governors understand the school and its context well. They are provided with a range of information to keep them well informed about the actions being taken to improve the school.

The school is taking reasonable steps to tackle pupils' absence and punctuality. The school focuses on promoting attendance well. However, it finds it difficult to engage with

some parents of younger pupils. Due to the persistent absence of some of these younger pupils, there has been little improvement in the school's overall attendance rates since the previous inspection.

The school has embraced the support from the local authority and diocese. This has been essential in empowering leaders in the school to bring about improvements to the curriculum. Staff value professional development opportunities from both the local authority and when working alongside other schools.

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

Yours sincerely

Steve Bentham
His Majesty's Inspector