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Chloe Webster
Principal
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Dear Mrs Webster

Requires improvement monitoring inspection of Thomas Hinderwell Primary Academy

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 12 April 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 has received a judgement of requires improvement at its last graded (section 5) inspection, and prior to this was judged to be inadequate.

The purpose of a monitoring inspection is not to grade the school's overall effectiveness, 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, representatives of the academy scrutiny committee and a representative of the trust, 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 a number of lessons, looked at pupils' work and spoke with pupils. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

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 the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from school decreases further so that more pupils are able to access their full learning entitlement.

Main findings

Since the last inspection in February 2023, you have been appointed as principal. You have overseen a number of changes within the school since your appointment, some of which were under way at the time of the last inspection. Alongside other leaders, you have improved the curriculum and ensured that staff are well trained and well supported to deliver this curriculum with consistency. As a result, the school's capacity to improve the quality of education that pupils receive has increased. You have also taken steps to improve behaviour within school. There is now a clear and well-understood approach to behaviour, which is having a positive impact.

The focus on staff's continued professional development has had demonstrable impact on improving the quality of education provided. Teachers demonstrate secure subject knowledge. There is a clear and consistent focus on pupils' acquisition of key knowledge, skills and vocabulary across the curriculum. Teachers use assessment carefully to understand pupils' starting points within the curriculum. They use this assessment to structure learning and allow pupils time to embed their learning through frequent revisiting. Lessons are engaging and pupils have positive attitudes to learning.

Pupils can talk about their learning with understanding. For example, in music, pupils can use technical vocabulary with confidence to describe elements of music notation. In science, pupils can explain the process of digestion and the role that the oesophagus plays in food transport and digestion.

Leaders have taken decisive action to address the areas for improvement from the last inspection. In partnership with other senior leaders in school and colleagues from the trust, you have reviewed provision within school and made changes where appropriate. Governors who sit on the academy scrutiny committee are well informed and are able to challenge leaders. They hold them to account. Trust representatives have a similar level of understanding of the progress the school has made. The support that the trust has offered has had a positive impact. Some school leaders now offer support to other trust schools. While there has been significant change in school as a result of the improvements you have identified, this has been managed with consideration for staff's workload and well-being. Staff feel well supported and valued.

Leaders have taken swift and effective action to improve pupils' behaviour within school. New 'zones' have been created in the playground to address concerns around poor behaviour at unstructured times. Pupils understand the activities that are allowed in these zones. They engage in positive, collaborative play within them. They move sensibly and calmly around the playground areas. Entry and exit times are calm and orderly. The number of pupils receiving fixed-term exclusions is decreasing. The proportion of pupils

are who are persistently absent from school is higher than national figures. This means that these pupils miss a great deal of learning and struggle to catch up. The school is taking positive action to address persistent absence. This is starting to have impact, but there is still more to do to secure lower levels of persistent absence.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer of David Ross Education Trust, the Department for Education's regional director and the director of children's services for North Yorkshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Richard Beadnall
His Majesty's Inspector