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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231  
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Sarah Philpott  
Headteacher  
Normanton-on-Soar Primary School  
Main Street  
Normanton-on-Soar  
Loughborough  
Leicestershire  
LE12 5HB

Dear Mrs Philpott

**Requires improvement monitoring inspection of Normanton-on-Soar Primary School**

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 8 February 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 two successive judgements of requires improvement at its previous graded (section 5) inspections.

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, one other senior leader, governors, the local authority school improvement advisor and other staff, 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 reviewed the school's self-evaluation document and leaders' school improvement plan. I scrutinised curriculum plans for history, art and physical education. I also visited lessons and the early years setting, looked at samples of pupils' work and spoke to pupils. I have considered all of 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.**

## **Main findings**

Since the previous graded inspection, staffing levels have remained stable. The school has appointed one new class teacher.

All leaders have a realistic understanding of the school's strengths and areas for continued development. You have sought and taken on board advice from external sources of expertise, including the local authority and a local multi-academy trust. Leaders and staff speak with enthusiasm about the professional learning opportunities extended to them.

You and all of your leaders are ambitious for all pupils to achieve well and to receive a good quality education. You have responded robustly to address the recommendations of the last inspection. You have recognised the necessary urgency to improve the quality of education provided for all pupils so that they can achieve as well as they can. The development of the curriculum has been prioritised. You and other leaders have carefully considered how the curriculum needed to be improved and you have researched suitable published schemes of work to support this.

You have ensured that the curriculum for all subjects is now fully mapped out so that it prioritises the key knowledge and skills that pupils should gain. The school now has a well-sequenced curriculum in place for all subjects. Teachers know when pupils should learn particular knowledge and skills as they study the curriculum. Teachers have secure knowledge of the subjects they teach. They regularly check pupils' understanding. On occasion, teachers do not use formative assessment effectively to check learning and misconceptions or identify gaps in pupils' knowledge to inform future teaching.

The changes made to the curriculum are helping pupils know and remember more. You have introduced knowledge organisers, key vocabulary checks and retrieval activities in some subject areas. Pupils spoke positively about these changes and felt that the retrieval quizzes that happen in history, geography and science lessons were helping them to remember prior knowledge.

Subject leaders are ensuring that all staff have precise clarity about what is taught and when. They have further ensured that curriculum plans build on what pupils have learned previously. The content of the curriculum is underpinned by the ambition and requirements of the national curriculum. Pupils commented that, very occasionally, the planned curriculum duplicates learning that has already happened in earlier years. Leaders recognise that the development of the new curriculum is still in the early days of implementation and are working hard to ensure that learning is progressive and not repeated.

Subject leaders have received high-quality professional development. You indicated that they now have ownership of their subjects and are more confident about what to monitor and the questions to ask to check the curriculum's implementation. Monitoring systems have been significantly improved. Leaders have time to monitor the effectiveness of their subjects' delivery through lesson visits and reviewing samples of pupils' work. They use

the information gathered as part of subject reviews to identify priorities and introduce strategies. For example, leaders recognised from monitoring pupils' science books that the work in them did not reflect the knowledge pupils had acquired. They identified that there was not enough time being given for pupils to write and reflect on their learning. Leaders then put in place changes to enable pupils to have time in lessons to write more independently and apply their learning. Leaders are very reflective and ambitious for all pupils.

Pupils are happy in school. They appreciate the help and support that all staff provide. Relationships between pupils and with staff are positive. Pupils know they are well cared for.

The governing body has an accurate understanding of the improvements required. They are proactive in visiting the school to check for themselves the pace of improvement. Working together with staff, the local authority, a local trust and governors, you have identified appropriate priorities for improvement. Your plans to address these are focused and achievable and are mindful of staff's workload and well-being.

There is an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and the areas still to improve. All staff and leaders possess the drive to bring about the necessary improvement.

In order to continue your progress in improving the school, the next step is to develop the implementation of the curriculum now that its intent is well understood and in place, and you have acknowledged that this should now be your main focus.

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 Nottinghamshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Dawn Ashbolt  
**His Majesty's Inspector**