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Ursula Clark
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Dear Miss Clark

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School

Following my remote inspection with Louise Walker, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), of your school on 27 and 28 January 2021, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions that have been taken to provide education to all pupils during the current circumstances.

This monitoring inspection was conducted under section 8 (2) of the Education Act 2005 (as amended) and in accordance with Ofsted's published procedures for visiting schools while routine inspections remain temporarily suspended. It was additional to the usual monitoring process for schools that are judged to have serious weaknesses.

Following changes to government guidance and the imposition of COVID-19 (coronavirus) lockdown restrictions, this monitoring inspection was carried out remotely. As such, the range of evidence available to inspectors was narrower than would normally be the case during an on-site inspection. As a result, this letter provides a more limited level of assurance than our usual monitoring reports.

The inspection took place because the school was judged to have serious weaknesses at its previous section 5 inspection. The school's most recent section 5 inspection took place in June 2019.

Having considered all the evidence and taking into account the impact of COVID-19 on the school, I am of the opinion that at this time:

Leaders and those responsible for governance are taking effective action to provide education in the current circumstances.

Context

- You joined the school as headteacher in September 2020. You have created two new key stage leader roles and an inclusion leader role in the senior leadership team. There is a new chair and vice-chair of the governing body. There are also five new governors.
- During the autumn term 2020, approximately one third of pupils had to be educated remotely. This included children in Reception and pupils in Years 3 to 6.
- At the time of the inspection, the school was only open to vulnerable pupils and the children of key workers. Approximately two thirds of pupils were learning remotely and one third were attending school. Nearly half of pupils who are vulnerable and two thirds of those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) were attending on-site.

Main findings

- You have worked hard, with your leadership team, to ensure that all pupils continue to receive education during this time of national lockdown. Leaders have carefully adapted the curriculum so it is suitable whether pupils are learning in school or remotely. Pupils working at home are studying the same things as those in school.
- Since September 2020, there have been several changes to the curriculum. Leaders have introduced a new reading strategy aimed at improving pupils' phonic understanding and fluency. Children in early years and pupils in Years 1 and 2 have extra time dedicated to learning phonics. Those children working at home watch recordings of their teachers reading stories and teaching phonics. This has helped children to develop their early reading.
- Improved reading strategies are being embedded in key stage 2. For example, teachers found that a large proportion of Year 3 pupils had fallen behind in their reading when they returned to school in September 2020. Additional teaching of phonics is ensuring that these pupils catch up in their reading.
- Leaders and teachers are well aware of the need to ensure that pupils practise and revise what they have previously learned. Since September 2020, the curriculum has been adapted to incorporate frequent opportunities for pupils to revisit what they had learned at home during the first national lockdown. In mathematics, leaders are embedding a new curriculum effectively that focuses on ensuring that pupils fully understand previous learning before moving onto new topics.
- You have put in place new ways of assessing what pupils have learned. Leaders and teachers check pupils' work and intervene if pupils need help or if

pupils are not engaging well enough in their learning. Teachers then help pupils to improve their work by advising them about the next steps to take.

- The inclusion leader works closely with all staff to ensure that pupils with SEND receive the help and support that they need. Staff adapt their planning so that pupils with SEND know what they need to do in their work. Teaching assistants' training has improved recently, meaning that they have an increasingly developed understanding of how to support pupils with SEND.
- Governors are improving the way that they monitor what leaders have told them about the education that is being provided in the current circumstances. However, these improvements are still in the early stages. Governors understand that there is still a need to strengthen their monitoring systems so that they can effectively hold leaders to account.
- The Diocese of Portsmouth has helped to recruit new governors and to improve governors' training. This has supported governors to understand their roles and how to hold leaders to account more effectively.
- The local authority has monitored recent improvements through visits to the school and frequent conversations with leaders. This has supported leaders in focusing on improving the school's curriculum and how it is delivered in the current circumstances.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. We held meetings with the headteacher, two key stage leaders, the inclusion leader, governors, a representative from the local authority, a representative from the Diocese of Portsmouth and several members of staff to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

We also observed parts of pre-recorded lessons and viewed resources available as part of the school's curriculum. We looked at pupils' work and spoke to pupils about their learning.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Diocese of Portsmouth, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Portsmouth. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Harry Ingham
Her Majesty's Inspector