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15 February 2021

Jamie Jardine  
Executive Principal  
The Prescott School  
Knowsley Park Lane  
Prescot  
Knowsley  
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Dear Mr Jardine

### **Additional, remote monitoring inspection of The Prescott School**

Following my remote inspection with Michael Pennington, 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 require special measures.

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 require special measures. The school's most recent section 5 inspection took place in March 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.**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should take further action to:

- develop staff expertise in adapting subject curriculums to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

## **Context**

- Since the previous inspection, new subject leaders have been appointed in English, science and physical education. Two new teachers, two counsellors and a number of teaching assistants have also joined the school.
- In the autumn term 2020, approximately seven in every 10 pupils experienced periods of remote education. This included pupils in all year groups. Some pupils have experienced repeated periods of self-isolation. This is especially the case for those pupils in Year 10.
- At the time of this inspection, the school was only open to vulnerable pupils and the children of key workers. Approximately one in 25 pupils were attending school. Since the school closed partially on 5 January 2021, approximately one fifth of pupils with SEND and approximately one fifth of vulnerable pupils are attending school.
- At the time of this inspection, leaders were not having to manage significant staff absence. A very small proportion of staff are currently absent due to COVID-19.

## **Main findings**

- You and the school's leadership team are taking appropriate steps to ensure that all pupils are provided with education in the current circumstances. During the months that followed the previous inspection, you focused on developing subject leaders' curriculum expertise. Following the partial closure of the school in March 2020, subject leaders were in the process of designing new curriculum plans. In the months that followed, you and subject leaders prioritised the completion of these plans. This was to ensure that teachers could deliver subject curriculums to pupils whether they were in school or working remotely.
- Following teachers' checks on pupils' learning during the autumn term, subject leaders successfully adapted their curriculum plans further. These changes were made to prioritise learning that pupils had missed or forgotten. For instance, in mathematics, leaders have carefully reordered topics to revisit number facts and calculation methods.
- Leaders strive to ensure that those pupils who struggle with reading can get the help that they need. For example, those pupils who need help with phonics, including those working remotely, can benefit from additional

support from school staff. Leaders have also produced resources to develop further pupils' comprehension skills. There are effective systems in place to check how often pupils can access support with their reading when they are working remotely.

- You and the school's staff ensure that pupils in Year 11 get support with their mental health and well-being. Pupils in Year 11 have access to resources designed to increase their motivation and confidence. For example, this group of pupils benefit from appropriate guidance to prepare them for the next stage in their education, employment or training. You continue to ensure that pupils in Year 11 can access learning across all of their examination subjects. This includes those pupils working remotely. Currently, you intend for pupils in Year 11 to sit mock GCSE examinations.
- The school's staff also prioritise the well-being of vulnerable pupils. You ensure that vulnerable pupils, both those in school and those at home, can continue with their education. For example, you and the staff ensure that this group of pupils has appropriate electronic devices and access to the internet. This means pupils are able to access their learning when they are working from home.
- Teachers use a range of online resources so that pupils continue to learn at home. For example, in science, pupils can watch videos that show how to set up practical experiments. Leaders have put systems in place to monitor whether pupils are accessing learning. Staff routinely use this information to update parents and carers.
- Staff ensure that pupils with SEND, both at home and in school, continue to receive an education. Staff offer additional help for this group of pupils. Teachers and teaching assistants have a better understanding of how to support these pupils than has been the case in the past. However, there is more to do to ensure that staff adapt subject curriculums effectively for pupils with SEND.
- Governors have an accurate understanding of the difficulties the school continues to face. They support you and the school's leadership team to navigate these challenging times. The governing body has focused on your work to help subject leaders to improve curriculum plans. In their regular discussions with you, governors also check on how effectively the school provides education for pupils in the current circumstances.
- The school is part of The Heath Family multi-academy trust. Support from the trust has benefited subject leaders. For example, trust leaders have helped subject leaders to adapt and refine their curriculum plans. The trust has also provided appropriate support for governors. As a result, governors are increasingly effective at monitoring the school's work and holding you and your leadership team to account.

- External support from a different multi-academy trust has helped to inform and develop subject leaders' curriculum expertise. More recently, support from a local school has ensured that staff have a better understanding of how to support those pupils with SEND.

## **Evidence**

This inspection was conducted remotely. Inspectors held meetings with the executive principal, the head of school and two other senior leaders. Inspectors met with teachers and subject leaders. The lead inspector met with three members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. Inspectors also met with other school leaders to discuss their actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

Inspectors examined the school's curriculum plans. They spoke with pupils in both key stages 3 and 4 about their current experiences in school and about their experiences of learning remotely.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer of The Heath Family multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Knowsley. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Emma Gregory  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**