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25 February 2021

Paul Bridgmount  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mr Bridgmount

**Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Risley Lower Grammar CE (VC) Primary School**

Following my remote inspection with Stephanie Innes-Taylor, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), of your school on 3 and 4 February 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 improvement.

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 has received two successive judgements of requires improvement. The school's most recent section 5 inspection took place in January 2020.

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:

- ensure that curriculum plans for the early years set out what children are expected to learn and when
- provide training for leaders responsible for subjects so that they understand their roles and can identify what is working well and what needs to improve in their areas of responsibility.

### **Context**

- Since the last inspection, a new chair of the governing body has been appointed. A new deputy headteacher has been appointed, on a temporary basis, for two terms. Further changes to the leadership structure will come into effect in the summer term 2021.
- During the autumn term 2020, a very small proportion of pupils were educated remotely.
- Currently, around one third of pupils are being educated on site. The vast majority of vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are attending on site.

### **Main findings**

- Senior leaders have successfully designed and implemented a new curriculum for pupils in key stages 1 and 2. This sets out what pupils are expected to know and remember over time, in each subject. The curriculum is well sequenced. However, senior leaders have not fully allocated responsibility for subject leadership to staff. Training for staff who become subject leaders is yet to be planned.
- Leaders have put in place a robust system to check on pupils' progress as they access the school's curriculum. Leaders use this information to monitor the quality of education pupils receive.
- Leaders have focused on improving reading. They have set out what pupils should be able to know and understand at each point throughout their time in school. Teachers make sure that pupils in key stage 2 read regularly and leaders check that this happens consistently.
- Phonics is taught systematically. However, some pupils have books that are too easy or too hard to read. Staff do not always pick up mistakes when pupils are reading. The recently appointed reading leader has not yet had a chance to check how reading is taught. Nevertheless, plans are in place to address this.

- The early years curriculum is at an initial stage of development. It does not yet set out clearly what children will learn and when. It does not make clear how children are being prepared for what they will learn as they move through school in key stages 1 and 2.
- Leaders have carefully considered how education can be delivered remotely. The content in some curriculum subjects has been reordered or changed. Teachers explain learning carefully and provide well-chosen resources. They check to make sure pupils are completing learning remotely. Where pupils are not, leaders follow this up to help and also to make sure that pupils are safe.
- Pupils attending school receive the same learning tasks as pupils who work from home. This means that pupils can attend school full or part time. Those in school get extra help to catch up when it is needed.
- Vulnerable pupils and pupils with SEND receive help and support from staff with their learning and well-being.
- Governors are ambitious for the school. They know what is working well and what needs to improve. They consider the views of staff and pupils to check how well the curriculum and remote learning are working.
- The local authority provides support and challenge to senior leaders. The improvement adviser has helped the school to improve their curriculum.

## **Evidence**

This inspection was conducted remotely. We held meetings with the headteacher, the acting deputy headteacher, a representative of the local authority, a group of pupils, a group of staff, and three governors, to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

We also looked at examples of remote learning and listened to pupils read to an adult in school.

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

Yours sincerely

Vic Wilkinson  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**