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Amanda Bartholomew
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Dear Mrs Bartholomew

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Anston Park Junior School

Following my remote inspection with Gill Wild, 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 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 three successive judgements of requires improvement at its previous section 5 inspections. The school's most recent section 5 inspection took place in September 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

- Since the last inspection, while staffing among teachers has been stable, there have been a couple of changes in support staff.
- Across the autumn term 2020, around half of the pupils had to be educated remotely at least once. A small number of pupils did so on two occasions.
- At the time of this inspection, three quarters of pupils were being educated at home, including two thirds of the pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The remaining pupils were being educated in school.
- At the time of this inspection, few teachers were absent due to COVID-19. Other staff in school have the capacity to cover their roles.

Main findings

- Leaders have made sure all pupils can access education during the current period of restrictions. You have chosen units of work that can be delivered both remotely and in school. This means vulnerable pupils and children of key workers in school access curriculum content similar to those learning remotely. You monitor pupils' engagement in remote learning and offer support to parents.
- Because some learning has been lost by pupils during periods of partial closure, you are adapting curriculum plans to fill gaps in pupils' knowledge. You will finish this work after you assess pupils, once pupils are back in school.
- You have used the experience of previous partial school closures to help shape your current offer of education. You have considered which parts of the curriculum you can deliver remotely. Pupils who are learning in school, and at home, are able to watch recorded lessons which are followed up with a range of different tasks. The curriculum offered remains broad, but there are limited opportunities to cover some subjects, such as art and design technology.
- In English, there is a focus on reading, grammar, punctuation and spelling. You have designed work to teach pupils specific knowledge and skills. You plan to help pupils to combine these individual components when school fully reopens, to complete more complex pieces of work. Pupils in the early stages of learning to read have access to phonics lessons and decodable texts. However, leaders are aware that staff would benefit from more training, so they can support these pupils more effectively to become fluent readers.
- In mathematics, you are focusing on the consolidation of pupils' prior learning. You have re-sequenced parts of your curriculum, leaving some things, such as fractions, to be covered later in the year than usual.

- The SEND coordinator has made sure there is a plan in place for each pupil with SEND. She is working closely with staff and parents to make sure these pupils have access to an education either at home or in school. Resources on the school website have been selected to ensure these pupils can continue to work towards their learning targets if parents do not send them to school.
- Governors receive a lot of information about the school. Currently, they have to rely on the headteacher to provide this. In more normal times, they visit school regularly to see for themselves the impact of leaders' actions and assertions. Governors demonstrated an understanding of the challenges faced by leaders as a result of COVID-19 and are providing appropriate support.
- Some governors are working in partnership with the local authority as a steering group for your school improvement work. This group is holding leaders to account for the impact of their actions to ensure all pupils are provided with an education in the current circumstances.
- Your work with the local authority to develop subject leadership has aided your work on curriculum planning and the provision of education at this time.

Evidence

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

We also looked at samples of pupils work, SEND documentation, some subject leaders' checks on learning, minutes of governing body meetings, minutes of steering group meetings and the headteacher's reports. We also considered 39 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View.

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

Yours sincerely

Chris Cook
Her Majesty's Inspector