

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231  
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Alex Prior  
Headteacher  
Wenlock C of E Junior School  
Beaconsfield Road  
Luton  
Bedfordshire  
LU2 0RW

Dear Mr Prior

### **Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Wenlock C of E Junior School**

Following my remote inspection with Fyfe Johnston, 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 two successive judgements of requires improvement at its previous section 5 inspection. The school's most recent section 5 inspection took place in February 2018.

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 previous inspection, the staff team has largely remained the same. Six governors have left the governing body and four have joined. From January 2021, you have been acting headteacher for the neighbouring infant school, working flexibly across both schools throughout the week.
- During the autumn term 2020, just over a half of pupils experienced periods of remote education because of COVID-19. This included all pupils in Year 4 and Year 6 who had to work from home at the same time for two weeks.
- At the time of the inspection, approximately 90% of pupils were being educated at home. Almost all of the very small number of vulnerable pupils, and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are attending school.
- A very small number of pupils are attending the school's on-site 'Lighthouse' behaviour support provision.

## Main findings

- Since the previous inspection, you and your leadership team have focused on developing and improving the school's curriculum. Over recent months, you have adapted how teaching is organised and delivered so that the curriculum can be taught remotely. You have made sure that every pupil has a suitable device so that they can take part in online lessons.
- Prior to March 2020, teachers were already using technology to deliver the curriculum. This enabled your staff to respond swiftly and adapt their teaching to provide remote education for pupils. Live lessons across different subjects are taught to pupils online and then recorded for future use. Pupils revisit these to help them remember important content. Parents appreciate the broad and structured remote education that their children receive.
- The curriculum is at the centre of the school's work. Since March 2020, across all subjects, leaders have identified the important knowledge they want pupils to remember over time, and the order in which this will be taught. In the autumn term, teachers began to teach these plans in all classes. Subject leaders check that teachers are teaching the planned content, and that they are teaching it in the correct order. Apart from some practical aspects of science and design and technology, the usual curriculum is in place.
- Leaders have made sure that vulnerable pupils come into school to learn or receive additional support to continue their education at home. Teachers check when vulnerable pupils join online lessons, and they check the quality of the work that those pupils are doing. Leaders offer extra support to pupils and their families if needed.

- In the previous academic year, leaders revised how reading is taught across the school. A new phonics programme was introduced to support pupils who find reading challenging. Staff are trained to make sure that this programme is taught consistently well. High-quality texts have been chosen for pupils based on breadth, pupils' interests and links to other subjects, for example history and geography.
- Leaders continue to prioritise reading throughout the school. Teachers are using a variety of ways to maintain the quality of the reading curriculum while pupils are learning from home. Pupils at the early stages of reading are taught structured phonics lessons online. Leaders make sure that resources are available so that parents know how to say different sounds correctly and can help their children practise at home. Teachers provide pupils with reading books that match the letters and sounds they know. All pupils are encouraged to read for pleasure, and they can access a wide range of books online. They enjoy listening to their teachers' daily recorded story sessions.
- Leaders have been quick to make sure that pupils with SEND take part in their online learning, either at home or in school, including in the Lighthouse provision. Pupils with SEND who may find learning at home more difficult are encouraged to learn in school. This enables staff to provide additional face-to-face support.
- Governors value the work of leaders and staff and hold them to account for the improvement of the school. Since the previous inspection, governors have been working more closely with subject leaders. This is enabling governors to increase their understanding of the curriculum across all subjects. Governors have recently focused on how leaders are making sure that all pupils can access a broad curriculum in the current circumstances.
- Leaders have used the advice and support from the local authority and external consultants to good effect. Training for leaders in English and mathematics has supported the improvement of the school's curriculum. Leaders' increased knowledge and confidence has enabled them to support teachers to develop their subject expertise. Training has focused on curriculum development and the quality of education. As a result, teachers understand how to plan and teach the school's curriculum in all subjects.

## **Evidence**

This inspection was conducted remotely. We held meetings with the headteacher and two other senior leaders, one of whom is also the special educational needs coordinator, four middle leaders, three governors, including the chair of the governing body, a local authority adviser and an external consultant. Discussions focused on leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

We scrutinised curriculum documents, recordings of live lessons, online teaching resources, minutes of governing body meetings and the responses made by parents to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. We also spoke with a group of pupils and held telephone conversations with some parents.

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

Yours sincerely

Fiona Webb  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**