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Nicola Kilvington
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Dear Mrs Kilvington

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Carrwood Primary School

Following my remote inspection with Tim Scargill-Knight, 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. The school's most recent section 5 inspection took place in April 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:

- ensure that staff are trained so that there is an improved and consistent approach to teaching phonics and reading for children and pupils at the early stages of reading
- develop curriculum plans that identify the most important content that pupils, and children in the early years, need to know and remember across subjects.

Context

- Since the previous inspection, restructuring and changes in senior leadership have taken place. A head of school was appointed in July 2020 and two assistant headteachers took up post in December 2020. Four teachers have left and three new teachers were appointed.
- Around one half of pupils were educated remotely across the autumn term 2020. Children in Nursery and pupils in Year 1, were affected by staff absence more than others.
- Approximately one third of pupils and two-thirds of vulnerable pupils are being educated in school. Two-thirds of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) who have education, health and care plans are attending school. One third of all pupils with SEND are on site.
- Currently, a small number of staff are not in school due to COVID-19. Prior to this term, significant staff absences affected leaders' plans for developing the curriculum.

Main findings

- You and your senior leadership team have ensured that education has continued for pupils throughout the period of national restrictions. You have made sure that pupils who need to work remotely have the necessary devices and support to do so. Recently, you launched a new system for delivering learning online. This is increasing the options and opportunities for pupils learning from home.
- Prior to schools partially closing on 23 March 2020, you were in the process of reviewing and developing your curriculum. This work was interrupted and delayed due to COVID-19 restrictions and periods of staff absence. Adults were redeployed to make sure that pupils in school and those learning from home continued to receive education. This term, staffing has stabilised and a renewed focus on the curriculum has begun.
- Subject leaders are reviewing their subject plans to make sure that the most important content is well sequenced so that pupils and children in the early years remember it. However, plans are further ahead in some subjects than

others. In mathematics and music, for example, planning is still imprecise and leaders have not thought carefully enough about learning in the early years.

- Staff know that reading is crucial for pupils' future success. Story times, phonics and reading lessons take place regularly for pupils in school and at home. A love of reading continues to blossom among staff and pupils as they enjoy books and stories together. However, some leaders and staff do not have a firm enough understanding of the approach used to teach phonics and early reading.
- You have prioritised education and support for vulnerable pupils and those with SEND, whether they are in school or at home. The special education needs coordinator (SENCo) continues to draw on the support of external experts at this time, for example speech therapists and educational psychologists. The SENCo has also continued to deliver staff training. This means that staff are more confident to offer pupils the precise work and support they need, including if they are learning at home.
- Governors have been supportive of leaders and staff, understanding and taking into account the effects of the pandemic on leaders and their priorities. They have continued to hold discussions with senior leaders, examining the quality of the offer for pupils learning remotely and in school. In this way, governors ask challenging questions of leaders, holding them to account for the quality of education provided. Governors have kept themselves up to date with matters such as the safeguarding of pupils.
- Prior to March 2020, local authority education advisers visited the school each term. Since then, COVID-19 restrictions have disrupted these face-to-face challenge and support meetings. You have, however, drawn widely on expertise and guidance from external sources. An external educational consultant and specialist subject leaders from curriculum hubs have helped to shape the education and provision now in place. Staff have appreciated this support and the professional development opportunities offered.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. We held meetings with the executive headteacher, the head of school, other senior and subject leaders, representatives of those responsible for governance and a representative of the local authority to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

We also visited lessons remotely, looked at documents, talked with a small number of pupils who were learning in school and held a telephone conversation with an external educational consultant.

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

Yours sincerely

Fiona Manuel
Her Majesty's Inspector