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Rachel Jacob
Principal
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Dear Mrs Jacob

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Pinkwell Primary School

Following my remote inspection with Gary Rawlings, 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 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.

Context

- Since the previous inspection, two vice-principals have left the school. A new senior vice-principal has been in post since September 2020. A vice-principal for curriculum was appointed in April 2019. Five members of the governing body, including the chair, have left. Directors of the trust currently govern the school.
- During the autumn term, two thirds of pupils had to work from home at some point. This included whole-class closures, with two Year 5 classes affected twice.
- At the time of this inspection, the Year 4 and special resourced provision 'bubbles' were isolating. Around one in every eight pupils were on site, with just under half of vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) in attendance. This is lower than normal due to the bubbles isolating.
- One tenth of staff are currently absent due to COVID-19. Most of these absences are due to the bubble closures.

Main findings

- Remote education has developed since last year. Online learning platforms were not used as extensively during previous periods of closure but are now utilised to set work for pupils remotely. The same work is set for all pupils, whether they are at school or at home. Teachers and teaching assistants are available throughout the day to support pupils as they complete activities.
- The current curriculum was launched in September 2019. Leaders decided to take a project-based approach for teaching subjects such as art, geography and history. Some aspects of this work are not able to be delivered remotely. Leaders explained that trips to local cafes and museums normally provide important experiences for their pupils, and these have been conducted virtually where possible.
- Leaders introduced a new mathematics programme in September 2019. It encourages deeper learning in each area of mathematics. Pupils are required to explain calculations in detail, to ensure they have mastered one concept before moving on to the next. Pupils in key stage 1 do this more confidently than those in Years 3 to 6. More work is therefore needed to embed the new curriculum consistently across the school.
- A new reading approach was introduced in November 2020. This new approach focuses on vocabulary and whole-class reading sessions. Teachers have found it challenging to teach whole-class reading remotely. Plans are in place to introduce live reading lessons for smaller groups of pupils in the coming weeks. The phonics programme for children in Reception and Year 1

was already well established and successful. Pupils at home and in school are able to access books that match sounds they know. However, leaders have identified that some pupils need one-to-one support with learning sounds when learning remotely from home. Individual phonics lessons started for these pupils during this inspection.

- Lessons in school continue for vulnerable pupils and children of key workers. Due to leaders' efforts, numbers attending have gradually increased. Teachers and teaching assistants provide these pupils with targeted support on site in reading and mathematics. Leaders have provided a large number of laptops to families that need them.
- Leaders prepared pupils for the current partial closure by using online learning platforms in school during the autumn term. Staff have supported families effectively, for example showing parents how to use devices and how to support learning activities.
- Pupils with SEND receive the same provision, whether they are at home or in school. The special educational needs coordinator ensures that all teachers consider pupils with SEND when planning remote education. Teachers give feedback to these pupils when they complete work online. Support from external professionals has continued as far as possible. For example, the speech and language therapist provides sessions for families to attend in person and online.
- The school is governed by the Operations Group. This group meets every six weeks. Board members check the remote education offer through accessing the online provision for themselves. Parents, pupils and staff are surveyed regularly, and the trust responds by raising any concerns with the principal and senior leaders.
- The trust also monitors vulnerable pupils and those with SEND. Senior leaders provide weekly reports which enable trust members to challenge pupils' attendance and involvement with learning. This has had an impact by increasing numbers of those being educated on site and increasing engagement with remote education.
- The trust brokers a range of support for leaders, including the use of consultants and subject specialists. The school continues to work with English and mathematics experts to embed new approaches in these subjects.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. We held meetings with the principal, senior leaders, and representatives from the multi-academy trust governance board to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

We also spoke with pupils and heard pupils read. We looked at the school's online learning platforms with teachers and reviewed pupils' work. We met with year group leaders, teachers and teaching assistants, reviewed a range of documentation related to the curriculum and remote education and considered comments from both staff and Parent View surveys.

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

Yours sincerely

Alison Colenso
Her Majesty's Inspector