

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



25 February 2021

Linda Hoyle
Executive Principal
Concord Junior School
Fife Street
Sheffield
South Yorkshire
S9 1NR

Dear Mrs Hoyle

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Concord Junior School

Following my remote inspection with Sheila Iwaskow, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), of your school on 23 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 at its previous section 5 inspections. The school's most recent section 5 inspection took place in June 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 curriculum plans for all subjects are well sequenced and identify the key knowledge that pupils need to learn.

Context

- There have been no changes in staffing or governance since the previous inspection.
- During the autumn term 2020, approximately one third of pupils had to be educated at home for a short period of time.
- At the time of this inspection around one third of pupils were being educated on site. This included three quarters of the school's most vulnerable pupils and approximately two thirds of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Main findings

- You have worked effectively with other school leaders to ensure that all pupils are provided with an education whether they are learning in school or at home. You have worked successfully with parents and carers to overcome barriers to learning. For example, you have ensured that all pupils who are working from home have access to the necessary technology.
- You have worked productively with staff and those responsible for governance to address weaknesses at the school. As a result, staff have increasingly higher expectations about what pupils can achieve. You have also developed positive relationships with parents. They are appreciative of what you are doing to provide education at the current time.
- Pupils who are attending school are following the school's usual curriculum. You have worked with subject leaders to ensure that pupils working at home can also follow this curriculum, using a combination of paper-based and online resources. This is helping these pupils to keep up with their learning. Pupils working at home also receive regular feedback from teachers on activities that they have completed to develop their learning further.
- You have focused on improving pupils' learning across subjects. You have worked with staff to develop curriculum plans that identify what pupils will study and when. However, some of these plans lack detail about what pupils are expected to learn. They also fail to identify how this knowledge should be sequenced so that pupils' learning builds effectively on what they already know and understand.
- You have thorough systems in place to ensure that pupils who are not currently attending school take part in remote education. If you notice that

pupils are not engaging in their learning you make contact with parents and provide swift additional support where necessary.

- You have prioritised the teaching of reading. Staff ensure that all pupils, whether they are educated on site or at home, read regularly. Pupils who are at the early stages of reading have access to phonics teaching every day. Teachers make regular checks to ensure that pupils are making progress in their reading. This is helping to ensure that pupils become confident and fluent readers.
- Leaders have made sure that vulnerable pupils are well supported in school. Many of these pupils are provided with additional support to help them with their learning. Where vulnerable pupils are being educated at home, leaders have ensured that they have the devices that they need to access the curriculum. You and the staff are in frequent contact with these pupils to check on their learning and well-being.
- The leader for special educational needs (SENCo) has worked alongside teachers to ensure that pupils with SEND are able to access the curriculum. This includes those pupils who are working at home. The SENCo keeps detailed records of pupils' engagement with learning and makes regular checks on the progress they are making. Where necessary, she helps teachers to provide additional resources. The SENCo has also provided training for staff and ensured that pupils with SEND have continued to receive support from other agencies. This is helping pupils with SEND to keep up with their learning.
- Staff are appreciative of the training that leaders provide for them. Those who responded to the staff survey also said they feel well supported. One member of staff summed this up by stating, 'Staff well-being is always taken into account when implementing and monitoring new initiatives'.
- The trust has provided valuable challenge and support to the school, including many opportunities for staff to develop their knowledge and expertise in different subject areas. For example, staff from the Infant school have supported the teaching of phonics in classes across the school.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. We spoke to you and other senior leaders. We also met with representatives of the trust including the chief executive officer and three trustees. These meetings were to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

We looked at examples of work that pupils have completed while working at home. We met with a small group of pupils to discuss their learning and to hear them read.

We considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 20 free-text responses. We also reviewed the 17 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaires.

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

Yours sincerely

Paul Tomkow
Her Majesty's Inspector