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Rachel Ayres
Headteacher
St Mary's Church of England Primary School
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Dear Mrs Ayres

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of St Mary's Church of England Primary School

Following my remote inspection with Caroline Poole, seconded inspector of schools, of your school on 10 and 11 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 December 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

- A small number of pupils were educated remotely during the autumn term 2020. A Year 6 class had to self-isolate for two weeks before the October half term.
- Currently, about a quarter of pupils are being educated in school. Around three quarters of vulnerable pupils and all of the pupils with an education, health and care plan are in school.

Main findings

- Leaders and the governing body have ensured that learning has continued for pupils. You have taken effective steps to ensure that pupils have received remote education. Pupils receive the same learning whether they are in school or working remotely.
- You have ensured that staff and pupils' well-being is at the forefront of the school's work. A national well-being award has recently recognised this. Staff morale is high. Staff told us that they are happy and proud to work at the school.
- Subject leaders have begun to plan and sequence the knowledge they want pupils to remember. COVID-19 has caused a delay to planned curriculum training for subject leaders. When possible, pupils are learning their usual curriculum. Leaders have re-ordered the content of some subjects. For example, there has been an increased focus on grammar skills in English.
- Teachers provide pupils with a wide variety of activities to ensure they can continue learning. Pupils, including vulnerable pupils and the children of key workers, are engaging well with this work. The family support worker supports these pupils and families when necessary. Teachers give pupils written or audio feedback on completed work. Inspectors saw many examples of pupils' completed work in a wide variety of subjects.
- Teachers provide a mixture of paper-based and practical activities to ensure that pupils can gain new knowledge and skills while they are learning remotely. Inspectors saw numerous examples of pupils being creative, for example making models, videos and cooking.
- You have ensured that phonics and early reading remain a high priority. Teachers are providing pupils with the phonics programme that they would normally follow. Pupils are given extra help should they fall behind. Pupils told us they enjoy reading and that they do so often. They said that there is a good range of books from which to choose.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are receiving an adapted curriculum. Teachers use the online platform to provide these

pupils with personalised videos or audio messages. The leader for pupils with SEND is helping staff to plan for these activities. Staff are providing pupils with extra resources. Staff are maintaining their contact with outside agencies. Pupils are continuing to receive specialist help and support.

- Governors have a wide range of skills and experience. They know the school's strengths and development areas well. The governing body is aware of the barriers the school is facing and what leaders are doing to overcome them. Governors understand their roles and responsibilities. They offer a variety of support and challenge.
- The local authority has provided a range of support. This includes helping to develop the curriculum and ensuring that leaders can check on the quality of education.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. We spoke to you, the deputy headteacher, members of the governing body, including the chair, a representative from the local authority, subject leaders, the leader responsible for pupils with SEND, the family support worker and a variety of staff to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

We also saw a wide variety of pupils learning, from Foundation through to Year 6, spoke with pupils and listened to pupils read. We looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 94 free-text responses, and 35 staff questionnaires.

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

Yours sincerely

Peter Stonier
Her Majesty's Inspector