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Terry Ryan
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Dear Mr Ryan

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Ferring C of E Primary School

Following my remote inspection with Frances Nation, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), 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 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.

Context

- An acting headteacher has been in post since January 2021. The school has an acting deputy headteacher, who has been seconded from another school until July 2021. The chair of governors was appointed in September 2020.
- The vast majority of pupils attended school during the autumn term. No classes or bubbles had to self-isolate during this time.
- At the time of this inspection, around 43% of pupils were being educated on site. Most pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), including those who have an education, health and care plan, were attending school full time at the time of this inspection. 48% of pupils identified as vulnerable by the school were being educated on site.

Main findings

- Leaders were well prepared to provide remote education at the start of the current lockdown. They had made significant improvements to remote education since March 2020. The school is prioritising the teaching of English and mathematics.
- The school provides a mixture of live and recorded lessons, as well as paper packs. Leaders have helped more pupils to access learning by providing laptops for pupils who do not have one. Leaders have strengthened communication with parents since the start of the pandemic. They keep in regular contact with families and are quick to provide support where needed. A number of parents who completed Parent View said that they appreciate the improvements made to remote education.
- Prior to March 2020, leaders had begun to review the curriculum, checking for coverage and balance. They are currently reviewing religious education and relationship, sex and health education. In some subjects, leaders have not identified the knowledge pupils will learn. They know that there is more to do in this aspect of the school's work.
- Leaders have made some adaptations to the school's usual curriculum during the current lockdown. For example, the teaching of some content has been postponed until later in the year. Leaders are rightly beginning to think about how they will need to adapt the curriculum following the current lockdown to ensure that nothing is missed in pupils' learning.
- Leaders have offered the children of key workers and all vulnerable pupils a place in school. The families of some vulnerable pupils have opted for remote education for their children. Leaders monitor pupils' engagement with remote education carefully. They are pleased that vulnerable pupils are getting on well with the work set by their teachers. Teaching assistants continue to

provide help for individual pupils, both in school and for those learning remotely.

- The school continues to give reading a high priority. Daily phonics sessions are provided for pupils in school and at home. Leaders introduced a new phonics programme in September 2020. They have re-allocated the school's reading books to match the new phonics programme. However, leaders acknowledge that there is more work needed to develop reading resources. The school continues to support pupils who need extra help with their reading, whether at home or in school. Leaders intend to deliver an intensive reading support programme when all pupils are back in school.
- The school is promoting enjoyment of reading well. For example, teachers provide live daily story times for pupils in school and at home. They provide books for pupils to read and give parents advice about suitable books that pupils can read online.
- Teachers make sure that the work set for pupils with SEND is aligned with pupils' individual education plans, including personalised learning packs for them to complete at home. External agencies, such as speech and language therapy, continue to provide specialist support.
- The governing body has strengthened its work in holding leaders to account during the past year. Governors are working closely with the local authority and the diocese to help them monitor and evaluate improvements in the school. Governors speak confidently about the remote education offer and recognise the improvements leaders have made during the past year. However, governors are also aware of the need to accelerate the pace of improvement once the current lockdown ends, particularly in work to improve the school's curriculum.
- The local authority and diocese have a clear view of the school's work. They intend to provide ongoing support for the school, including a planned review of the school's curriculum at the earliest opportunity.
- Leaders have been working closely with a headteacher from a local school who is a national leader in education (NLE). They have focused on improving remote education for pupils learning at home. The NLE recognises that further work is needed to strengthen the school's curriculum.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. We spoke to you and other senior leaders, members of staff, representatives of those responsible for governance, representatives of the local authority and the diocese, and pupils to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

We also reviewed curriculum plans, viewed some samples of recorded lessons and looked at some pupils' work. We looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 45 free-text responses, and 20 staff questionnaires.

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

Yours sincerely

Julie Sackett
Her Majesty's Inspector