

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



9 March 2021

Michael Parker  
Headteacher  
Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Primary School  
Lynwood Road  
Blackburn  
Lancashire  
BB2 6HQ

Dear Mr Parker

**Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Primary School**

Following my remote inspection with Jackie Stillings, 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 three successive judgements of requires improvement. The school's most recent section 5 inspection took place in May 2018.

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 show how teaching will build on what pupils have learned before.

### **Context**

- Since the previous inspection, there have been no departures or appointments of key staff. Two new governors have been appointed.
- Across the autumn term 2020, a small proportion of pupils were educated remotely for short periods of time.
- At the time of this inspection, around half of pupils were being educated in school. Approximately half of all vulnerable pupils were being educated at home. Two thirds of the pupils with education, health and care plans were attending on site.

### **Main findings**

- You have taken a wide range of effective steps to ensure that teachers provide pupils with an education, either in school or remotely. For example, you have delivered laptops and learning packs to pupils' homes. Staff make very regular visits and phone calls to parents and carers to offer support and guidance. Your actions ensure that most pupils learning from home take part in daily online lessons. For pupils in school, and those learning remotely, teachers deliver the school's usual curriculum. Teachers have made necessary adaptations to some parts of the curriculum. For example, in design and technology, teachers provide tasks which can be completed by using resources that pupils have at home.
- Before the start of the pandemic in March 2020, you and leaders were in the process of developing the school's curriculum. You continue to make this a priority. The current curriculum plans outline the knowledge that you intend pupils to learn. You and other leaders have considered pupils' starting points and experiences when designing the curriculum. For example, you have planned trips and activities to broaden the knowledge of vulnerable pupils after the pandemic. However, the plans lack detail about how pupils will deepen their learning by revisiting what they already know. It is unclear how new knowledge will build on pupils' prior learning.
- You and the staff keep the teaching of reading at the forefront of all that you do. Staff teach phonics lessons daily for those pupils in school and those learning at home. You have taken a range of steps to ensure that vulnerable pupils read regularly. Each day, teachers spend time sharing books and stories with their classes. For example, children in the Reception class who are learning at home, join online to hear their teacher read a story. Staff provide appropriate and swift support for pupils who fall behind in their early

reading. Teachers give extra reading help to pupils who speak English as an additional language who are new to the school. You and other leaders make regular checks to ensure that this is the right support to help pupils to catch up quickly.

- The school's special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) keeps a careful check on the support teachers give to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The SENCo ensures that targets within pupils' individual support plans are included in the learning activities planned by teachers. Those pupils with SEND learning from home receive their usual range of support, including small group or individual teaching. Staff contact these pupils twice daily to offer useful guidance. Teachers work closely with external agencies, such as speech and language therapists. This has helped leaders to identify if pupils who join the school require additional support.
- Governors provide an effective balance of challenge and support for you and other leaders. They ask questions about the curriculum provision for pupils in school and those learning remotely. Governors help leaders to make important decisions about how best to support vulnerable pupils. They ensure that pupils receive the range of support that they need in order to access teaching from home. Governors check on staff well-being regularly so that staff feel well supported.
- You and the staff benefit from a range of external support. The local authority consultant has helped you to keep a close check on the impact of school improvements. For example, she has worked with subject leaders to coach them in how to check that teachers are delivering the curriculum as planned. As a result of this support, subject leaders know how to carry out their role effectively.

## **Evidence**

This inspection was conducted remotely. We spoke to you, other senior leaders, pupils, a group of teachers, subject leaders in English, mathematics and history and the school's SENCo. We also met with three representatives of those responsible for governance and a representative of the local authority. We spoke with a representative of the diocese. These meetings were to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

We also observed pupils when they read with an adult. We checked the school's curriculum plans. We looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 12 free-text responses, an email sent by a parent, and 22 staff questionnaires.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Diocese of Salford, the regional schools commissioner and the director of

children's services for Blackburn and Darwen. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Elizabeth Stevens  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**