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Annie Kenton
Head of School
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Dear Mrs Kenton

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Quethiock Church of England School

Following my remote inspection of your school on 25 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 October 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:

- improve the curriculum to ensure pupils' knowledge is developed effectively over time in all subjects
- sharpen the checks made on the learning of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Context

- Since the previous inspection in October 2018, the temporary governing body has become established as the local governing body. A new teacher took up post in the spring term of 2021.
- Across the autumn term 2020, a small number of pupils had to work from home due to COVID-19.
- At the time of this inspection, approximately 45% of pupils were being educated on site. All vulnerable pupils were attending on site. Approximately 55% of pupils with SEND were attending school for either some, or all, of their learning. You do not have any pupils with education, health and care plans.
- At the time of this inspection, leaders were not dealing with any significant staffing issues. No staff were absent due to COVID-19.

Main findings

- You and other leaders are taking the necessary actions to provide education in the current circumstances. You have carefully reorganised the content that pupils learn in some subjects, such as religious education (RE) and science. This is ensuring that pupils are able to continue their learning whether they are at home or in school.
- You have rightly prioritised the teaching of reading across the school. In September 2020, you put in place effective support for those pupils who had fallen behind in their early reading. Teachers provided suitable books to match the letters and sounds pupils were learning. You also introduced extra reading sessions to help pupils make links between letters and the sounds they make. As a result, by December 2020, most pupils were catching up.
- You have improved the way teachers plan the teaching of writing. It is well structured and organised. This has supported pupils to know more and remember more of the curriculum. You have introduced a 'reading spine' of classic books that pupils must read. This is helping pupils to improve the use of formal language in their own writing.

- Teachers have carefully checked pupils' mathematical knowledge. You have found that some pupils' recall of number facts from memory is not where you would like it to be. You have put additional support in place. For example, teachers are helping pupils to practise their 'times tables'. Such action is helping pupils to catch up with this learning quickly.
- When schools partially closed on 23 March 2020, you and trust leaders had already made well-considered improvements to some subject plans, such as geography, history and science. They show how subject knowledge is developed across the school from Year 1 to Year 6. You had hoped to have revised the full curriculum by now, but this has been delayed by COVID-19 restrictions. Consequently, there are still weaknesses in the design of the curriculum in some subjects, such as music and foreign language. In these subjects, there is a lack of clarity about what pupils should know and by when.
- You are relentless in encouraging vulnerable pupils and the children of key workers to attend school during the current restrictions. As a result, all of your vulnerable pupils are attending on site. Pupils, who need to catch up in reading, are receiving extra help in school or remotely.
- You and the SENCo have a secure understanding of the needs of pupils with SEND. Together, you follow up concerns quickly to provide appropriate pastoral support for pupils with SEND, including those who are learning remotely. You are checking whether pupils are completing their learning. However, these checks are not detailed enough to tell you whether pupils are making the academic progress you expect of them.
- The local governing body provides effective support and challenge. Governors have made an important contribution to the improvements that can be seen in the school. They understand the challenges you face in providing an education in the current circumstances. Nevertheless, they are competently holding you and trust subject leaders to account for the quality of education you provide.
- Trust staff are providing strong support for teachers. This is helping to improve the quality of education in the early years, and in English and mathematics. The trust leaders enlisted valuable specialist support from external partners to improve the curriculum in some other subjects, such as science.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. I spoke to you, other trust leaders, the multi-academy trust chief executive officer and representatives of those responsible for governance to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

I reviewed school documentation, such as curriculum plans and remote education information. I also looked at samples of pupils' work online. I looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 29 free-text responses, and 6 staff questionnaires.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer or equivalent of the St Barnabas multi-academy trust, the director of education for the Diocese of Truro, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Cornwall. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Sue Costello
Her Majesty's Inspector