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Dear Mrs Stewart

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Charter Primary School

Following my remote inspection with Wayne Simner, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), 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 special measures.

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 was judged to require special measures at its previous section 5 inspection. The school's most recent section 5 inspection took place in November 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 pupils who have fallen behind in learning to read are helped quickly to catch up.

Context

- Two acting deputy headteachers have joined the senior leadership team since the previous inspection. Two members of staff have left the school and four have joined. A new special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) started in January 2021. The size of the governing body has been reduced since the previous inspection and the chair of governors is new in role. Plans are well underway for the school to join a multi-academy trust.
- In the autumn term 2020, approximately one fifth of pupils spent some time being educated remotely because of COVID-19. Children in the Nursery and a group of pupils in Year 1 were affected by this more than others.
- Approximately two thirds of pupils were learning remotely at the time of this inspection. Three quarters of pupils who are vulnerable and around one third of those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) were attending on site.

Main findings

- Leaders are ambitious and have high expectations. Their commitment has ensured that pupils continue to follow their usual subjects, despite the current challenges. For example, leaders have provided families with electronic devices so that pupils can access the curriculum online. Paper work packs are available if requested. Teachers work hard to explain their preferred digital approach to pupils. They have also provided assistance for some families. As a result of leaders' actions, the number of pupils engaging with learning at home has increased over time.
- Leaders have thought carefully about their remote learning provision and make considered choices. They analyse and reflect on what is, or is not, working well. For example, leaders identified that it would help some pupils to access additional live sessions. As a result, leaders have enhanced the remote provision. These pupils now benefit from extra live sessions with a teacher in the afternoon. In addition, leaders have introduced a system so that teachers can provide useful verbal feedback to all pupils about their work.
- You and your leaders have improved the approach to teaching younger pupils to read. As part of this improved approach, leaders have invested in new resources and organised training for staff. Consequently, there is more consistency in the teaching of phonics. These improvements help teachers to deliver sequenced phonics lessons both in school and remotely. However, leaders told us that many pupils are behind where they expect them to be.

Staff are not hearing pupils who are at home read as often as they usually would.

- Leaders are determined to encourage vulnerable pupils to attend school. They have introduced a weekly lesson so that these pupils, and others learning on site, can take part in outdoor learning. Leaders say that this session broadens pupils' vocabulary and promotes their well-being. Leaders check that vulnerable pupils who are at home do the work that teachers provide. Systems are in place to contact those who do not.
- Leaders are focused on improving the provision for pupils with SEND. They have acted quickly to support pupils with SEND in the recent period of lockdown restrictions. Pupils attending school receive enhanced support. This support includes extra one-to-one sessions with adults. Staff keep in regular contact with families of those who are learning at home. Resource packs have been supplied to help organise daily tasks. As a result, most of these pupils complete the work that is set.
- Governors' oversight of the school is strong because they are clear about their responsibilities. They make regular checks on the effectiveness of leaders' actions. Governors have a detailed understanding of how education is being provided in the current circumstances. This understanding has helped them to ask leaders challenging questions about how the curriculum is being delivered.
- Leaders value the support they receive from the local authority and a local multi-academy trust. This support has improved leaders' effectiveness and they have grown in confidence. The local authority's guidance has strengthened decision-making processes. Roles and responsibilities are more distinctly defined. External reviews of safeguarding and school improvement have helped leaders and governors to make informed decisions. Partnership work with other schools has assisted leaders in assuring the quality of the remote learning offer.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. We spoke to you, two deputy headteachers, curriculum leaders, the SENCo, pupils and governors. We also spoke to a representative from the local authority and the chief executive officer of a local multi-academy trust to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

We scrutinised a range of documents, including examples from the school's remote education offer. We looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 19 free-text responses, and 26 staff questionnaires.

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

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Leonard
Her Majesty's Inspector