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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Mark Rogers
Headteacher
Barrowcliff School
Ash Grove
Scarborough
North Yorkshire
YO12 6NQ

Dear Mr Rogers

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Barrowcliff School

Following my remote inspection with Zoe Lightfoot, 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 two successive judgements of requires improvement. The school's most recent section 5 inspection took place in October 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:

- develop the curriculum offer, ensuring that each new unit of work builds on the prior learning of pupils to ensure that the curriculum is coherently sequenced and planned from early years to Year 6 in all subjects
- act quickly when the school fully reopens to ensure the curriculum continues to be adapted to pupils' needs and the support provided enables vulnerable pupils catch up and keep up, in order to achieve their ambitious end points.

Context

- There have been few changes in staff and governors since the last inspection.
- Across the autumn term 2020, approximately half of all pupils had to be educated remotely. Classes in Year 1 and Year 6 were affected more than others due to repeated periods of self-isolation. The school was subject to a full closure for four days in December on the advice of Public Health England.
- At the time of this inspection, less than half of all pupils were being educated on site. The majority of vulnerable pupils were attending on site. All pupils with education, health and care (EHC) plans were attending on site.

Main findings

- Leaders have made the continuation of education during the periods when the school has only been open to some children a priority. They have ensured pupils who need to work remotely have access to the necessary devices and support to do so. Senior leaders work hard to engage families who are difficult to reach and shared the widespread support they put in place for pupils struggling to access their learning remotely. As a result, leaders are building stronger relationships with hard-to-reach families.
- Leaders have redeveloped the school's curriculum. They are working determinedly to establish a strong offer. Subject leaders are adapting their curriculum plans and are clear about the challenges that they have overcome in offering this curriculum remotely. Leaders know that they should continue to develop their curriculum offer. This must ensure that each new unit of work builds on prior learning and that the curriculum is coherently sequenced and planned.
- Leaders have prioritised places in school for vulnerable pupils, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and the children of key workers. Leaders have ensured that those pupils who require additional interventions continue to receive these. Pupils who work remotely engage well with a range of pre-recorded sessions and clear, independent tasks accompanied by regular feedback from their teachers. Pupils continue to be

well supported in learning to read. Teachers are following a systematic approach to the development of reading across the school.

- Leaders have ensured that pupils with SEND are well supported. All staff have undertaken recent training in SEND. Documents, such as My Support Plans, are in place and include additional safeguarding measures relevant to COVID-19. All pupils with EHC plans and the majority of pupils with SEND are attending on site. When all pupils return to school, leaders must act quickly to ensure that the curriculum continues to be adapted and the right support is put in place to ensure that all vulnerable pupils catch up and keep up in order to achieve their ambitious end points.
- Governors have acted thoughtfully in ensuring all pupils receive an education. Governors have strengthened their strategic monitoring and link governor roles; this is aiding their own evaluation of the school's work. Governors are increasingly ambitious for pupils and families in their community. They should continue to be curious regarding pupils' achievements, ensuring they have the highest expectations for all pupils.
- Leaders and those responsible for governance enjoy the regular challenge and support of an advisor from the local authority. This advisor knows the school's strengths and areas for development well. As such, this partnership has approached and tackled a number of key priorities. Leaders and those responsible for governance are eager to develop additional partnerships, particularly in curriculum development.

Evidence

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

We also looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 29 free-text responses, and 42 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 North Yorkshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Marcus Newby
Her Majesty's Inspector