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Claire Gurden
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Gurden

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Christ the King Primary School

Following my remote inspection with Elizabeth Stevens, Her Majesty's Inspector, of your school on 3 and 4 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 have serious weaknesses.

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 have serious weaknesses at its previous section 5 inspection. 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 the knowledge content of all subject plans is clearly identified and well sequenced, and that the curriculum end points are clearly identified.

Context

- Since the previous inspection, a new leader with responsibility for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) has been appointed.
- During the autumn term, around one quarter of pupils had a short period of time when they were educated at home.
- At the time of the inspection, just over half of the pupils were being educated at home. This includes around half of those pupils with SEND. Around six in 10 of those pupils identified as vulnerable were being educated in school.
- At the time of this inspection, a small proportion of staff were absent due to COVID-19.

Main findings

- Since the previous inspection, you have worked with staff and governors to steadily improve the work of the school. Teachers appreciate the training and support that you have provided. All members of staff believe that the school has improved over the past two years.
- At the start of the pandemic, you were in the process of introducing a new curriculum. In subjects such as English and mathematics, clear curriculum plans are in place, and there is evidence of improvement in pupils' learning. You have recently begun to develop plans that focus on the knowledge that pupils need to acquire in the wider curriculum. These plans have helped teachers to sequence pupils' learning more effectively in subjects such as geography and history. However, not all areas of the curriculum have been included in this recent development. In some subjects, there is not enough detail about what pupils should be learning and when they should cover this content.
- You have successfully adapted the curriculum so that pupils who are attending school or working from home are able to access their usual timetable and subject content. You have also recently improved the way that teachers provide learning resources for pupils who have to work remotely. This is enabling these pupils to access the same learning as those who work in school. You have had concerns about the number of vulnerable pupils who are at home and are not engaging in learning on a regular basis. You have taken action to address this issue. You now have daily online communication with all pupils who are working remotely. You also encourage parents and

carers to participate in these meetings. These developments have increased levels of engagement in learning across the school, particularly for vulnerable pupils.

- You have prioritised the teaching of reading. The reading curriculum has been improved and staff have benefited from phonics training. They spend time reading with pupils each day. They make regular checks on the progress that pupils are making in phonics. This includes pupils who are working remotely. Staff pay special attention to those younger pupils who are struggling with phonics. They ensure that pupils do not fall behind by providing additional support when this is needed. Staff are keen to encourage a love of reading. They record bedtime stories for pupils and their parents to enjoy together. The older pupils that we met with were keen readers and read their books fluently. Those working at home are able to access a wide range of online resources to support their reading.
- The newly appointed leader for SEND has developed a strong working relationship with teachers, teaching assistants and parents. She has improved the range and quality of the additional support that is provided for pupils, whether they are learning at home or in school. She has a good understanding of pupils' needs. This means that detailed records and support plans have been put in place for each pupil with SEND. She ensures that regular checks are made on the progress that pupils with SEND are making. She has also continued to work closely with other professionals, such as speech and language therapists, so that pupils with SEND, and their families, get the help that they need.
- Members of the interim executive board (IEB) maintain a good oversight of the school. They are fully aware of the challenges you are currently facing and have supported you in the development of your online learning provision. They also provide challenge to you and other leaders. For example, they recently questioned you about how well staff are meeting the needs of those pupils who are learning at home.
- You have made good use of the additional support provided by the local authority and the dioceses since the previous inspection. Subject leaders have benefited from working with consultants. This has helped in the development of the school's new curriculum. You have also worked with a national leader of education. She has helped you to put systems in place to review the progress that you are making to improve the school.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. We held meetings with you and other senior leaders. We also met with the chair of the IEB and a representative of the local authority. This was to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown. In addition, we reviewed curriculum plans and the

school's arrangements for delivering the curriculum remotely. We also met with pupils and observed some pupils reading. We considered the nine responses to the staff survey.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the IEB, the directors of education for the Diocese of Shrewsbury and the Diocese of Chester, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Cheshire East. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Paul Tomkow
Her Majesty's Inspector