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Nicola Davies
Executive Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Davies

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Holgate primary and nursery school

Following my remote inspection Christine Watkins, 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 received a judgement 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 curriculum plans that set out what pupils, including the youngest, need to know and remember over time in all subjects.

Context

- Since the last inspection, there have been few changes in staff. A new chair of governors has been appointed. The mathematics leader has been appointed from within a group of schools with which the school collaborates. A temporary teacher has joined the school for one year.
- Around one third of pupils in the school were educated remotely for a period of time during the autumn term 2020. This included a Year 4 and Year 6 'bubble' that closed.
- Currently, about two thirds of pupils are learning at home. Around half of the pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and the majority of vulnerable pupils are attending on site.
- Leaders have dealt with a significant number of staff absences related to COVID-19. These absences have been managed by redeploying staff from within the school.

Main findings

- Leaders are continuing to develop the curriculum. They have ensured that the school curriculum meets all the requirements of the national curriculum. They are also developing curriculum plans to identify what knowledge pupils need to know and when. In some subjects, such as science and physical education, this work is further developed. Some curriculum plans do not show what the youngest pupils need to know.
- Teachers have received regular training to deliver education remotely. Pupils working at home and in school study the same curriculum. Typically, pupils receive daily remote teaching in English, mathematics and other subjects. Content in some subjects has been reordered, to be taught later in the year.
- Leaders continue to prioritise reading across the school. Teachers promote a love of books by sharing videos of themselves reading aloud. Pupils have opportunities to read a range of books. All pupils at the early stages of reading receive daily phonics teaching. Some pupils receive additional help to practise the knowledge needed to read words. Vulnerable pupils and pupils with SEND are provided with extra books that contain words they can read.
- Teachers have developed different ways to provide feedback to pupils learning at home. Staff have created videos to help parents understand how they can help their child with remote learning.

- Leaders have prioritised language development for vulnerable pupils. For a small number of these pupils working at home, leaders have provided electronic devices to help them access online remote learning. Leaders ensure regular communication with families of vulnerable pupils.
- Teachers use assessments to provide the support that pupils with SEND working at home may need. When it is appropriate, these pupils receive personalised resource packs and individual support as part of their timetable. Pupils with SEND are provided with equipment to help them with their learning. For example, pupils with dyslexia have coloured over lays. Staff trained in speech and communication development provide effective support to pupils with language difficulties. Leaders have continued to seek advice from support agencies to meet the needs of pupils with SEND.
- Governors understand what is working well and what needs to improve. They continue to check on leaders' actions in the current circumstances. They help leaders to understand difficulties some families may have with remote learning. Governors understand that the curriculum needs further development.
- Support from the local authority has helped leaders to make some improvements with the curriculum. There are plans to support subject leaders further, so that they can improve curriculum plans across all subjects.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. We spoke to you, other senior leaders, curriculum leaders, 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 reviewed curriculum plans and heard pupils read. We looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 46 free-text responses, and 38 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 Nottinghamshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Shaheen Hussain
Seconded Inspector of schools