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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Annette Kimblin
Headteacher
Light Hall School
Hathaway Road
Shirley
Solihull
B90 2PZ

Dear Mrs Kimblin

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Light hall School

Following my remote inspection with Christopher Stevens, 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 a judgement of requires improvement at its previous section 5 inspection. The school's most recent section 5 inspection took place in November 2017.

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.

Context

- Since the school's last inspection, a deputy headteacher left the school. The leadership team was then restructured. This has resulted in the appointment of two new deputy headteachers and five new assistant headteachers. A new chair of governors is in place. Five new governors have also joined the governing body.
- During the autumn term 2020, approximately 50% of pupils had to work at home at some point because of COVID-19. This affected pupils in Year 10 more than other pupils.
- At the time of this inspection, approximately 95% of pupils are being educated at home. Approximately 10% of vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are currently being educated on site.

Main findings

- Leaders plan the curriculum carefully. They continually review it to make sure that it is meeting pupils' needs. Information from parent and pupil surveys helps leaders to improve the remote education curriculum. For example, parents were concerned about the amount of time their children were working online. Leaders therefore made lessons shorter so that pupils have adequate breaks from their screens. Leaders told us that they have found many positives from educating pupils remotely. For example, in the future they plan to use it to provide education for pupils who are absent from school.
- Pupils continue to study all subjects. The curriculum in some subjects has been revised. Leaders think carefully about this. For example, in science, teachers are changing the order in which they teach some units. They have made these changes to help pupils who are working at home. Leaders say they are confident that pupils will be able to go back to their usual curriculum when they return to school.
- Leaders make regular checks on the well-being of pupils who are at home. Leaders use the information from these checks to identify pupils and their families who may need extra help. Support from external agencies is available for those who need it.
- Staff know their pupils well. This includes pupils with SEND. Leaders provide staff with the information they need to support this group of pupils. Also, leaders check that annual reviews for pupils with an education, health and care plan are up to date. Learning support assistants check on pupils with SEND in lessons. They tell the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) if pupils are finding the work too easy or too hard. The SENCo then works with the class teacher to make changes. Pupils with SEND are doing well as a

result. Leaders' plans include how they will support pupils with SEND when they return to school.

- Leaders plan careers, education and guidance across all year groups effectively. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education or employment and training. This means that over time, the number of pupils not in education, employment or training has been low. This year, nearly all Year 11 pupils have applied for post-16 provision. Leaders are now starting to check that this provision matches pupils' ability.
- Reading is a whole-school priority. Leaders make sure that all staff are appropriately trained so that they can help pupils to develop their literacy skills. Leaders use assessments to identify pupils who need extra help with their reading. Extra money given to the school helps to buy appropriate reading programmes for these pupils. Pupils learning at home can follow the reading programmes. Leaders say they will check how effective these programmes have been in helping pupils to improve their reading when they return to school.
- The governing body have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. This includes checking that all pupils are receiving an education in the current circumstances. They challenge leaders about the school's provision for remote education. This includes holding leaders to account for pupils' welfare and attendance, their plans for Year 11 and the quality of education that pupils receive.
- Leaders value the support they have from the local authority. This includes the support provided by the school improvement team and the advisory teachers for remote education. This support has ensured that pupils are receiving an appropriate education in the current circumstances.

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 looked at pupils' work. We also looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including the 81 free-text responses, and 96 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 Solihull. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Lesley Yates
Her Majesty's Inspector