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Steve Davis
Acting Headteacher
West Huntspill Community Primary
New Road
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Dear Mr Davis

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of West Huntspill Community Primary

Following my remote inspection 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 special measures.

This monitoring inspection was carried out remotely. As such, the range of evidence available to the inspector 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 January 2020.

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:

- prioritise the development of the reading curriculum
- implement agreed, effective approaches to the teaching of reading
- improve the quality of the curriculum as pupils return to school by checking what pupils have learned and remembered, and using this to adapt teaching.

Context

- Two governors have been appointed since the previous section 5 inspection.
- During the autumn term 2020, pupils in the Year 4, 5 and 6 class were educated remotely for 10 days. A small number of pupils learned remotely for a few days.
- At the time of this inspection, 61% of pupils were learning remotely at home. 58% of vulnerable pupils and 50% of pupils with education, health and care plans were learning in school.
- At the time of this inspection, the headteacher was absent from school. An acting headteacher has been in post since January 2021.

Main findings

- The school's remote learning policy provides clear information to parents about the learning that is taking place for pupils who are not in school. Teachers provide appropriate pre-recorded lessons or printed materials. These lessons replicate, as far as possible, the school's planned curriculum.
- Since the previous inspection, leaders have reviewed the quality of learning across the school. Working across the federation, they introduced a new curriculum plan in September 2020. New approaches to teaching mathematics and writing are now in place. However, it is too early to see the impact of these changes.
- Leaders have introduced a new phonics programme which is helping young readers to make a strong start. Nevertheless, leaders have just started to prioritise reading across the school. You recognise that there is still much to do to improve the quality of reading.
- There have been significant improvements to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff have had extra information about how to recognise and support pupils' barriers to learning. This helps them to be more precise when they identify and support pupils' individual learning targets. As a result, pupils with SEND are receiving more effective teaching.

- Pupils with SEND, vulnerable pupils and pupils of key workers attending school receive similar lessons to those working remotely. Teachers and teaching assistants provide helpful, additional teaching when needed. Where necessary, staff provide additional guidance for parents to support learning at home.
- Governors are responding well to the valuable support provided by an improvement adviser. A deeper understanding of their roles is leading to more effective challenge to school leaders. Governors are proactive in checking that pupils are receiving an education at this time. Governors have organised a parent survey and a review of current learning. They are making sure that leaders seek out parents' views and take these into account when making improvements to the curriculum.
- Following the previous inspection, with support from the local authority, an improvement group was formed. Frequent meetings about how the school is improving help you and your team to keep a focus on the actions needed. New senior leaders, working with subject leaders, have brought in changes to support the curriculum and are providing training for staff. There is more to do to check the difference that these actions make to pupils' learning.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. To discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown, I spoke to you, other senior leaders and representatives of those responsible for governance. I also met with a representative of the Priory Learning Trust which supports the school on behalf of the local authority.

I also looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 11 reviewed free-text responses, and 10 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 Somerset. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Tonwen Empson
Her Majesty's Inspector