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Dear Mrs Flynn

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of The Trinity Catholic Primary School

Following my remote inspection with Elizabeth Stevens, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), of your school on 25 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.

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 March 2019.

Having considered all the evidence and taking into account the impact of COVID-19 (coronavirus) 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 teachers identify precisely what knowledge they want pupils to know and remember
- embed improvements to the school's curriculum plans.

Context

- Since the previous inspection, there have been several changes to staffing and governance. Four members of the senior leadership team have left the school. Two existing members of staff have gained promotion to assistant headteacher positions. A deputy headteacher has been seconded from the local authority and will remain at the school for the rest of this academic year. The governing body has six new governors, including a new chair and vice-chair.
- During the autumn term 2020, approximately half of the pupils were educated remotely for a short period because of COVID-19. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 had two repeated periods of self-isolation.
- At the time of this inspection, approximately four fifths of pupils were learning at home. All vulnerable pupils were in school. Just over one third of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) were attending on site.

Main findings

- Before March 2020, you prioritised improving the curriculum and stabilising staffing. Subject leaders took part in a range of training to develop their curriculum expertise. This enabled them to design curriculum plans which identify how subject content is organised. More recently, leaders have adapted the curriculum to make it accessible to all. This means that you, other leaders and staff have been successful in ensuring that pupils continue to learn during the current national lockdown. Alongside their academic needs, pupils' emotional and mental health needs are also met. This includes pupils learning at home as well as in school.
- You and other leaders know all pupils well. As a result, you have been able to offer the most vulnerable pupils a place in school. Where needed, laptops and access to Wi-Fi have been provided to pupils learning at home. All pupils have access to paper-based and practical resources. These resources supplement the online learning provided. Staff act quickly if pupils do not engage in learning. They provide appropriate support to pupils and their families. Consequently, pupils' engagement has increased over the last few weeks.
- Leaders of subjects such as science and geography have given careful thought to planning the knowledge that pupils learn, and when they learn it.

They have considered pupils' starting points. This includes thinking about how pupils build on their learning from the early years. In this way, these subject leaders ensure pupils have the knowledge they need to be ready for their next stage of education.

- Other subject leaders have developed their expertise in checking how well pupils are learning the revised curriculum. Leaders use these checks well to inform teaching. For example, in mathematics, teachers plan opportunities for pupils to revisit their previous learning and develop their fluency in calculations. However, some of these changes are more recent and are still embedding.
- You have placed a strong emphasis on developing pupils' vocabulary in different subjects. Teachers share with pupils the subject-specific vocabulary that they want them to remember in each lesson. However, teachers do not always identify the precise knowledge that they want pupils to know and remember over time.
- You have prioritised the teaching of reading and phonics across the school. Over recent months, you have invested in a range of high-quality literature. The school now has two well-stocked libraries. You have ensured that pupils learning at home have access to a range of suitable online books. This includes books that match the sounds that younger children and pupils are learning. Pupils' love of reading has been sustained as a result. Teachers have given careful thought to supporting the parents and carers of children learning to read at home. For example, teachers use videos to model the correct enunciation of sounds. As a result, daily phonics lessons ensure that pupils who are learning at home keep up with those learning in school.
- Leaders have ensured that all staff have the training and expertise they need to help pupils with SEND. Teachers make every effort to support pupils through carefully laid out plans, including adapting the curriculum for pupils with SEND who are learning at home. Teachers record learning videos to give extra guidance. This enables pupils with SEND to learn successfully alongside other pupils.
- Many governors are new to their roles. Despite this, the governing body has a concise and accurate view of the school. Governors regularly review the education pupils receive in school and when learning remotely. They also survey pupils to find out their views. This helps governors to check the information that leaders share with them. As a result, governors have a good overview of the education that pupils are receiving during the current circumstances.
- Leaders enjoy strong partnerships which offer a range of support, challenge and experience. The local authority and archdiocese have provided extensive support to subject leaders. This has resulted in many improvements to the school's

curriculum. The archdiocese guided the governing body through a period of significant change. The school's governance is stronger as a result.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. We spoke to you, the deputy headteacher, other senior and middle leaders, representatives from the local authority and archdiocese, governors and pupils to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

We also looked at a wide range of documentation, including curriculum plans, minutes of meetings of the governing body and a sample of pupils' remote learning. We observed pupils from Years 1, 2 and 3 read to a trusted adult and viewed pre-recorded lessons. We looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including four free-text responses, and 27 staff questionnaires.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Archdiocese of Liverpool, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Liverpool. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jackie Stillings
Her Majesty's Inspector