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Oriana Dalton
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Dear Mrs Dalton

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Fenstanton and Hilton Primary School

Following my remote inspection with Paul Wilson, 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 require improvement.

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 two successive judgements of requires improvement at its previous section 5 inspections. The school's most recent section 5 inspection took place in February 2020.

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 the newly introduced curriculum is implemented effectively so that it matches leaders' intentions, is understood by all staff and is ambitious for all pupils
- continue to develop assessment so that it effectively underpins the curriculum in every subject
- ensure that subject leaders have the knowledge and skills that they need to lead and develop their curriculum areas effectively.

Context

- Since the previous inspection, there have been changes to the senior leadership team. The headteacher and deputy headteacher left in August 2020. Two part-time interim headteachers and an acting deputy headteacher started in September 2020. A deputy headteacher was appointed and started in January 2021. The school has not yet appointed a permanent headteacher.
- In the autumn term 2020, a very small number of pupils were educated remotely as a result of COVID-19.
- At the time of the inspection, 25% of all pupils were being educated on the school site. Approximately 40% of vulnerable pupils, and 40% of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), were attending on site.

Main findings

- When you started working at the school, you reviewed with staff what was being taught and how. Senior leaders have acted quickly and decisively to put in place a new curriculum for all subjects.
- The pandemic has slowed your work in implementing the new curriculum. There remains work to do to ensure that leaders put this in place consistently. Staff do not yet have a secure knowledge and understanding of what to plan and teach in all subjects. You have begun training subject leaders in how to be effective in their role. However, because of COVID-19, you have asked all staff, including subject leaders, to prioritise providing education to pupils in the current circumstances.
- You and your leaders have taken effective actions to provide education both on site and for pupils learning at home. Staff communication with families has supported pupils' engagement. You have provided laptops and other resources so that pupils can access education remotely. Pupils are following the same curriculum in all subjects whether they are in school or at home.

- You have improved the remote education that the school provided in the first lockdown. You have continued to offer a broad curriculum. However, you have put a greater focus on reading, writing and mathematics than other subjects. Pupils are learning the same content in most subjects as they would usually. Teachers have made some changes to the order in which some subject content is taught. In mathematics, for example, teachers have delayed teaching a unit on shape and space because they can deliver it more suitably at school with appropriate resources.
- Teachers regularly check pupils' work and help them to understand how to improve it. Teachers use these checks to adapt what they teach next lesson. Leaders are developing assessment so that it underpins the curriculum. However, this is in the earlier stages of being used throughout all subjects.
- You told us that when you started at the school, you found reading to be a strength. Leaders promote a love of reading, for example through encouraging pupils to read online texts. During the current national lockdown, leaders have provided pupils with books at home that support reading for pleasure. Leaders have set up a 'bike shed library' so that pupils can borrow books to read at home while the school is closed to most pupils. Teachers know who the weaker readers are and are supporting them. Younger readers are continuing to learn new knowledge about phonics.
- You have made sure that vulnerable pupils continue to receive the support that they usually would. Leaders have worked hard to ensure the most vulnerable pupils are attending school on site. Staff spend time ensuring that pupils are ready to learn and take care to look after pupils' well-being.
- Leaders have continued to act on their plans for pupils with SEND. Teachers have adapted their approaches for these pupils. Staff have shared information so that pupils are supported when working with less familiar adults. Pupils with SEND who work at home receive regular contact and help.
- Governors know the importance of appointing a headteacher who is right for the school. Governors have responded to the disruption in senior leadership. They are reflective about their roles. A review of their work has identified what they need to do to be more effective. As a result, they have adapted their processes so they can provide support to leaders. Governors have asked the leaders challenging questions about remote learning. Although the pandemic has stalled some of the governor checks, they do still find ways to meet and speak to leaders.
- The local authority has supported the school during the past year. A local authority implementation group meets regularly to support and challenge the work of the school. Local authority advisers have provided training for the teaching of English and mathematics. The local authority has supported leaders with providing remote education. The interim headteacher's

federation of schools has also provided support, for example they have given video examples of teaching for training purposes. The federation has also added leadership capacity by seconding the interim deputy headteacher to help the school.

Evidence

This inspection was carried out remotely. We spoke to you and the other interim headteacher. We also spoke to other senior leaders, teachers, support staff and pupils. I spoke to members of the governing body, including the chair, and a representative of the local authority to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

We also looked at some of the lessons and tasks pupils do when they are working at home and examples of pupils' work. We considered 109 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 36 free-text responses, and 21 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 Cambridgeshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Charlie Fordham
Her Majesty's Inspector