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Sonia Hegan
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Hegan

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Dry Drayton CofE (C) Primary School

Following my remote inspection of your school on 10 and 11 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 present 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 June 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.

Context

- A new headteacher was appointed in January 2020. Approximately two thirds of staff have joined the school since the previous inspection. New members have joined the governing body. Two governors share responsibility for chairing the governing body.
- During the autumn term 2020, a very small proportion of pupils needed to isolate at home.
- At the time of this inspection, just over one third of pupils, mostly children of key workers and a small proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), were being educated on site. All other pupils were being educated remotely at home.

Main findings

- You and your new team of staff are working collectively to ensure that pupils remain safe and are being provided with education in the current circumstances. Staff and parents praise the care and support provided for their children and the arrangements put in place for their learning during this period of lockdown.
- Last year you prioritised providing pupils with a safe, caring environment in which to learn. Developing a better curriculum matched to your school's vision and values has also been a top priority. This has led to better sequencing of learning in English and mathematics, and a more consistent approach to the teaching of phonics. However, the challenges presented by successive periods of lockdown have slowed the progress made in developing the wider curriculum.
- With the full support of your governors, you have acted promptly to implement the same remote learning for pupils in school and for those working at home. You have sensibly checked that all pupils have access to a suitable device for learning. Your staff go out of their way to deliver learning packs of work and equipment to pupils' homes.
- A blend of live, online teaching and suitable follow-up tasks for pupils to complete by themselves is ensuring that they can continue to follow most of their usual curriculum. This includes a range of well-planned enrichment days. Some aspects of practical learning in music and modern languages are on hold until lockdown ends.
- Children told me that school feels 'a bit strange' at the moment without their friends but they feel that learning online allows them to keep in touch and share what they are doing. You are monitoring their learning effectively by asking them to upload completed work online so their teachers can see how

well they are doing. Daily online assemblies are used well to promote pupils' well-being, to sing together and celebrate their achievements.

- The school's very small size means that everyone knows each other well and the individual needs of pupils and their families are known. You, as the special educational needs coordinator, ensure that pupils with SEND engage in the same curriculum as others and gain from the bespoke, one-to-one support provided for them. Staff maintain contact with the families of a few pupils with SEND who currently learn at home, to ensure they have the resources and support they need.
- Reading is suitably prioritised. In the early years and key stage 1, your staff continue to use resources effectively to teach phonics systematically in daily lessons. In key stages 1 and 2, teaching assistants provide effective, one-to-one support for the very small proportion of pupils who need help with their early reading. Your staff ensure that reading for pleasure is promoted well. Newly introduced online books enable pupils to read widely and often, at home. Children who met with me talked enthusiastically about the stories they are currently reading.
- My discussions and the minutes of meetings confirmed that governors provide you with regular support. They also hold you to account by asking questions about the quality of education currently being provided for pupils, including those known to be vulnerable. Governors have monitored how you have developed the curriculum. This work will resume once lockdown ends.
- You have good working relations with the local authority. You value highly the support they have provided to help you settle into your new role and manage the school during the pandemic. Your school improvement partner has maintained regular contact with you during lockdown and brokered links with other local schools to help inform your actions in the present circumstances.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. I spoke to you and your staff, a group of pupils, the two co-chairs of the governing body and two representatives of the local authority to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown. I also observed a small sample of live and recently recorded lessons and reading support sessions. I looked at 32 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including letters from four families, and nine staff questionnaires.

I am copying this letter to the two co-chairs of the governing body, the director of education for the Diocese of Ely, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Cambridgeshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

John Mitcheson
Her Majesty's Inspector