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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Amy Harvey
Headteacher
St Peter's C of E Aided Junior School
Trafford Road
Wisbech
Cambridgeshire
PE13 2ES

Dear Miss Harvey

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of St Peter's C of E Aided Junior School

Following my remote inspection with Isabel Davis, 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 March 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:

- further develop the curriculum in subjects other than English and mathematics, so that new learning builds on pupils' existing knowledge and skills
- ensure that, in all subjects, staff check how well pupils can remember the things that they have been taught.

Context

- Across the autumn term 2020, approximately 25% of pupils had to be educated remotely. Years 3, 4 and 5 had to isolate for a two-week period.
- At the time of this inspection, 74% pupils were being educated remotely. 60% of the school's vulnerable pupils and all pupils with an education, health and care plan were attending on site.

Main findings

- Since March 2020, you and your team have spent time adapting the school's curriculum. Pupils are being taught a wide range of subjects in school and at home. Your training enabled staff to deliver online teaching to pupils at home and in school. This means that all pupils are being provided with education in the current circumstances.
- You have made changes to the curriculum to enable the teaching of practical aspects of subjects. This is helping parents to support their children with some of the practical activities in these subjects while learning at home.
- Parents are typically very appreciative of the information and the education that teachers are providing. Other than Latin, all other subjects within the school's curriculum are being taught. Teachers are using a range of strategies to check what pupils are learning. Leaders plan to assess the depth of pupils' learning that has taken place once pupils return to school.
- Since the previous inspection, leaders have continued to develop the school's curriculum. In subjects other than English and mathematics, changes to curriculum plans are at an early stage. Key decisions about the content, the order in which it is taught and how pupils are assessed have yet to be made.
- You are continuing to make improvements to the reading curriculum. Staff who teach phonics have been trained in the school's phonics programme. Teachers are delivering the teaching of reading three times a week through live lessons. You have made sure that all pupils have access to a wide range of texts online, as well as hard copies that can be returned and changed at school. The weakest readers are being taught in small groups. This additional support is helping them to catch up.

- Staff know their families well. Relationships between parents and school have grown even more positive due to high parental engagement. Staff have worked effectively to engage vulnerable pupils in their learning.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well looked after. Staff know the support that individual pupils need and ensure that they receive it, liaising with external agencies where necessary. Skilled staff monitor the progress that pupils are making during live lessons and help those who are struggling to move on in their learning. You are ensuring that parents know the best ways to support their children's learning.
- Governors have high expectations for all pupils. They challenge leaders appropriately in governor meetings and during monitoring visits to the school. Governors and the trust are working together to check the quality of the school's remote education provision. Governors are also ensuring that there is a continued focus on school improvement.
- All leaders are ensuring that there is a strong focus on staff training and development. This is helping the school to improve. The trust is providing support, particularly in developing subject leadership. This work is helping to improve the delivery of the English curriculum. There is now a much more consistent approach to the teaching of reading and writing. There is still much to do to ensure that leaders of subjects other than English and mathematics plan their curriculum content so that new learning builds on what pupils already know and can do.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. We held meetings with the headteacher, and senior leaders, including the SENCo, subject leaders, teachers, teaching assistants and a group of pupils. We also met with two members of the governing body, including the chair of governors, and representatives from the trust, including the chief executive officer, to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during the national lockdown. We observed live and recorded online lessons. We also sampled pupils' work and spoke with leaders responsible for pupils' well-being. We also considered 30 responses to Ofsted's survey for staff, and 30 responses and comments to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the chief executive officer of the Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust, 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

Cindy Impey
Her Majesty's Inspector