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Katherine Milk
Headteacher
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Dear Miss Milk

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Bungay Primary School

Following my remote inspection with Andrew Hemmings, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), of your school on 2 March 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.

Following changes to government guidance and the imposition of COVID-19 (coronavirus) lockdown restrictions, 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 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 the following actions to:

- develop the curriculum further, so that in all subjects new learning builds on pupils' existing knowledge and skills across all year groups
- ensure that there are effective systems in place to check how well pupils have understood what they have learned.

Context

- Across the autumn term 2020, approximately 26% pupils across all year groups had to be educated remotely at some point.
- At the time of this inspection, 60% of pupils were being educated remotely. 76% of the school's vulnerable pupils and 60% of pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan were attending on site.

Main findings

- Since March 2020, you and your leaders have adapted your curriculum so that all pupils are receiving an education. Pupils at home and in school are accessing their education through recorded online lessons. Those in school are receiving additional face-to-face support. There are opportunities each day for pupils to speak with their classmates and teachers. This is helping pupils to keep in touch and engage positively in their learning.
- Pupils are receiving their usual mathematics and English curriculum. All other subjects are being taught, although some content has been moved to later in the year, such as gymnastics and swimming. Teachers are routinely providing feedback to pupils about their work in a variety of ways. This is helping teachers to check what pupils know and can do. Teachers know that some pupils, particularly those not in school, have missed some subject content. Leaders plan to check and address any gaps when pupils return to school.
- Leaders have identified what pupils need to do to be able to read fluently. Leaders have trained staff so that there is a consistent approach in the delivery of phonics across the school. This is helping weaker readers to catch up. Precise teaching of reading and carefully chosen texts are helping pupils to improve their reading skills and develop a love of reading.
- Subject leaders are in the process of developing the curriculum to meet the needs of all pupils. In curriculum subjects, leaders are reinforcing links with the school's local community, while helping to raise pupils' aspirations. Leaders have not fully made the decisions about the precise skills and knowledge that pupils should learn in all subjects across all year groups.
- Staff are vigilant and know families well. All pupils at home are contacted routinely. You have made sure that the most vulnerable pupils are attending

school. The increased communication between school and home has meant that parental engagement is very strong. You are continuing to provide social, emotional and other forms of support for the most vulnerable pupils in school and at home. This is helping to increase the attendance of vulnerable pupils in school, and the engagement of those learning at home.

- Since the previous inspection, leaders have improved the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders are identifying what pupils need with more precision. You are working well with external agencies to ensure pupils with SEND get any support they need. Parents are engaging with the online learning. This is helping them to learn useful strategies to support their children at home. Pupils are engaging with their learning readily as a result of these changes.
- You are making sure that governors are well informed about the actions you are taking to ensure that all pupils are receiving an education. Governors work with leaders to check the remote offer routinely. They provide support and challenge and have robust systems in place that enable them to hold school leaders to account. Governors are continuing their focus on curriculum improvements. All leaders are realistic about the work that still needs doing.
- The trust is providing support such as coaching and mentoring to leaders and staff. Leaders value the opportunities to observe and share best practice among the schools within the trust. This has supported improvements, particularly in developing provision in the early years and the reading curriculum.

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 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 recorded online lessons and spoke with leaders responsible for pupils' well-being. We also looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including five free-text responses, and 25 staff questionnaires.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the chief executive officer of Asset Education multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Suffolk. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Cindy Impey
Her Majesty's Inspector