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23 March 2021

Tony McGuinness
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Dear Mr McGuinness

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of All Saints Catholic High School

Following my remote inspection with Alyson Middlemass, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), of your school on 5 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 require improvement.

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 has received two successive judgements of requires improvement. The school's most recent section 5 inspection took place in April 2018.

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 further action to:

- develop teaching assistants' knowledge and expertise in reading, including phonics, so that they can support pupils to overcome gaps in their reading knowledge.

Context

- Since May 2019, leaders have appointed several new staff. This includes a new subject leader in geography, a lead teacher for science and a key stage 4 English coordinator. The head of history and the head of art and design recently gained specialist leaders in education status.
- Leaders have also appointed a full-time careers coordinator and an additional attendance officer. Several new teaching assistants and teachers have begun working at the school.
- During the autumn term 2020, a small number of pupils had to be educated remotely for short periods of time due to self-isolation. This included pupils across all year groups, but particularly in Years 9 and 10.
- At the time of this inspection, approximately nine out of 10 pupils were being educated at home. Just under one half of pupils who were identified as vulnerable, and approximately one half of the pupils with an education, health and care plan, were being educated in school.

Main findings

- Despite the impact of the COVID-19 restrictions, you have ensured that all pupils follow their usual curriculum, whether they are learning on site or at home. Staff deliver remote education well because of the training that they have received. Parents and carers are positive about the support that teachers have provided to help their children to learn during the pandemic. You, the leadership team and the staff have worked together successfully to ensure that you provide an education to all pupils in the current circumstances.
- Prior to March 2020, subject leaders were well on the way to revising and refining the content of their curriculums. For example, curriculum plans in subjects including mathematics, science, history, art and design and geography were rewritten to identify the important knowledge that pupils needed to know and remember. Subject leaders also took effective steps to consider the order in which this content should be taught.
- Despite this positive work on the curriculum, your revised subject plans required further adaptations to ensure that pupils could successfully access learning from home. You knew this because in September 2020 you proactively reviewed how you had delivered remote education in the previous

spring and summer terms. Following this review, you successfully made further adaptations to the delivery of the curriculum to ensure that pupils could learn effectively from home or in school. For example, you trained all pupils to access and feel confident in using your chosen online systems.

- All pupils follow their usual timetable. Teachers have developed effective strategies to check on how well pupils are learning. Pupils receive useful feedback that helps them to improve their work. Form tutors prioritise well-planned activities that support pupil's mental health.
- You have successfully prioritised reading. All subject leaders identify subject-specific texts. They teach pupils strategies to read and understand these texts. Teachers are effective at identifying pupils that are struggling with their reading. However, some pupils do not improve their reading skills as quickly as you intend. This is because teaching assistants do not have enough knowledge about early reading, including phonics, to ensure that they can support pupils to overcome gaps in their reading knowledge.
- Pupils in Year 11 and students in Year 13 follow their usual range of examination subjects. During the pandemic, these pupils and students have benefited from a range of careers guidance and one-to-one advice. They have also received effective support with applications to colleges and universities.
- Vulnerable pupils in school and those studying remotely are learning well. If they struggle to access learning, they benefit from help from support staff. Pastoral staff make regular contact with vulnerable pupils who are learning at home. This helps to address any difficulties that they may have with remote education. Leaders work closely with external agencies to ensure that pupils and their families receive extra support if needed.
- Leaders ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive a similar education to what they would normally experience. They are following their personalised learning plans. Teaching assistants provide effective support to pupils learning on site and to those pupils who are learning remotely. Staff check regularly on those pupils with SEND that are not in school.
- Governors have a clear oversight of the curriculum in school and the remote education that pupils are receiving. Governors meet remotely with you and other leaders regularly. Members of the governing body have been effective in holding you to account. They, along with you, have taken an interest in ensuring that staff's workload and well-being are thoughtfully considered.
- The local authority has provided helpful support and challenge to you and the senior leadership team, including by recently conducting a review of your remote education offer. The Archdiocese of Liverpool has supported subject

leaders in developing their understanding of how to improve their curriculums.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. We spoke with you, other senior leaders, subject leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, the pastoral lead, staff and pupils. We also spoke with the chair of the governing body, representatives of the local authority and representatives of the Archdiocese of Liverpool to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

We examined a range of documents provided by the school, including minutes of the governing body meetings and a sample of the school's curriculum plans. We looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 114 free-text responses. We reviewed the 97 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.

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 Knowsley. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Sue Eastwood
Her Majesty's Inspector