

The Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



18 March 2021

Nicola Lightwing  
Headteacher  
Manor Primary School  
Beechwood Drive  
Birkenhead  
Prenton  
Merseyside  
CH43 7ZU

Dear Mrs Lightwing

### **Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Manor Primary School**

Following my remote inspection with Janette Walker, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), of your school on 4 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 October 2019.

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 plans for those subjects in the wider curriculum that are not well sequenced. In these plans, subject leaders should also identify the key knowledge that pupils will learn from early years to Year 6
- develop the role of those leaders who are responsible for subjects other than English and mathematics
- provide high-quality phonics training for all staff in key stage 2 so that they are well equipped to support the weakest readers.

### **Context**

- The deputy headteacher was in charge of the school for 12 months after the last inspection. You returned to your post in January 2021.
- A new chair and vice-chair of governors have recently been appointed. Several new governors have also joined the governing body.
- During the autumn term 2020, more than half of all pupils in the school learned from home for a short period of time.
- At the time of this inspection, almost a third of pupils were being educated onsite. Almost half of vulnerable pupils are in school. Less than half of the pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are onsite.

### **Main findings**

- You, other leaders and governors make sure that all pupils, whether they are in school or at home, have equal access to the curriculum. This means that all pupils, including vulnerable pupils, continue to enjoy their education despite the current circumstances. Since March 2020, you have improved the education pupils receive when they learn from home. You have set clear expectations about how pupils can access the curriculum from home, which are understood by parents and carers.
- Prior to March 2020, you had started to review and restructure the curriculum. You focused your attention on the curriculum plans for reading, phonics, mathematics and physical education as a starting point. Curriculum plans for these subjects now clearly show the knowledge that pupils will learn and remember as they move through the school. Due to the pandemic and significant staffing issues, your intention to develop well-sequenced plans in other subjects has faltered. Consequently, developing and implementing a well-structured and ambitious curriculum in many subjects beyond English and mathematics is still at an early stage of development.

- Several members of staff have received training to develop their subject knowledge in English and mathematics. This has helped some teachers to become more skilled in delivering the curriculum in these subjects. This training has also supported the English and mathematics subject leaders to manage their areas of responsibility more effectively. Many leaders of subjects in the wider curriculum are new to their posts. They lack the knowledge and skills that they need to lead their curriculum subjects competently.
- You ensure that all pupils, including vulnerable pupils, have access to suitable devices when accessing the curriculum at home. Paper-based resources are available, if required. This has enabled many pupils to continue their learning when studying from home. Teachers mark pupils' work frequently. This means that teachers know if pupils have understood the key content of the lesson and allows them to plan for future learning. Teachers provide parents with appropriate guidance to help them to support their children's learning at home.
- All pupils, including children in the early years, are accessing a wide range of national curriculum subjects at home and in school. Teachers have made some necessary adaptations to the order in which some subjects are taught. For example, in mathematics, some topics have been reordered to allow pupils more time to consolidate basic mathematical knowledge, such as counting and calculating.
- You and other leaders prioritise the teaching of reading. You aim to ensure that pupils, including vulnerable pupils, become confident readers. To achieve this, you make sure that there is a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics across the school. Pupils access daily phonics lessons, at home and in school. Younger pupils, including children in the early years, read books that closely match the letter sounds that they know. This helps to promote their love of reading and consolidates their phonics knowledge. Less confident readers in key stage 2 also have access to the school's phonics programme. However, staff in key stage 2 have not benefitted from the same high-quality phonics training as their colleagues in key stage 1. This hinders older pupils at an early stage of reading from becoming confident and proficient readers.
- You make sure that pupils with SEND are supported at home and in school effectively. Pupils attending school work well with familiar staff. This is enabling this group of pupils to catch up with their learning. You and other leaders work in partnership with external agencies to ensure that any additional help that pupils at home or in school need continues.
- Within the last 12 months, there have been significant changes to the governing body. Many new governors have accessed training to enable them to hold leaders to account for all aspects of the school's work. Most governors

have a clear understanding of what the school does well and what needs to improve.

- The local authority has a clear understanding of the impact that the pandemic has had on staff and pupils. They have provided you and your staff with appropriate levels of support during the current challenging circumstances. For example, staff have received training on remote education. This has helped them become more confident when delivering education to pupils who are accessing the curriculum at home.

## **Evidence**

This inspection was conducted remotely. We held meetings with you, senior leaders and teachers. We spoke with pupils and observed them read to a member of staff. We held meetings with members of the governing body and with representatives of the local authority to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

We also examined a range of documentation, including examples of the school's curriculum plans. We looked at 11 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including seven free-text responses, and we considered 16 responses to Ofsted's 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 Wirral. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Sheila Iwaskow  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**