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Bethany Stanley
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Stanley

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Aiskew, Leeming Bar Church of England Primary School

Following my remote inspection with Noeman Anwar, 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 June 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:

- ensure that children in the early years foundation stage, particularly children learning at home during the current circumstances, access all the areas of learning
- fully implement the changes made to the curriculum so that subject content is clearly sequenced and helps to build pupils' knowledge.

Context

- There have been no changes to key staff since the previous inspection.
- Approximately a quarter of pupils had to be educated remotely across the autumn term 2020. No whole classes or year groups were affected. There were no repeated periods of self-isolation for any pupils.
- At the time of this inspection, almost half of pupils were being educated in school. Almost all pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) were attending on site. Two thirds of vulnerable pupils were in school.

Main findings

- Leaders and governors have prioritised pupils' access to education in the current circumstances. Pupils study the same subjects whether they are learning on site or at home.
- Teachers are adapting the subjects provided for pupils effectively. You and your team provide remote education in a variety of ways. Teachers' decisions are based on what they feel works best for pupils of different ages. Staff take resources to pupils learning at home so that they can participate fully in remote education. For example, teachers sent home glockenspiels so that pupils could take part in music lessons.
- Since the previous inspection, leaders have focused on improving the education pupils receive. They have looked for ways to plan and teach subjects to mixed-age classes. Leaders have redesigned subject planning and aim to build up pupils' knowledge year-on-year. Changes to curriculum plans for English and mathematics are now embedded. Changes to other subjects have started, but leaders' progress with this work has been delayed because of the COVID-19 restrictions.
- Leaders provide effective support for vulnerable pupils. They distribute devices and resources so that pupils can access learning online. Most vulnerable pupils attend school, where adults give extra help with learning. Leaders also keep in regular contact with the parents and carers of vulnerable pupils. They offer support and help parents to access services available from external agencies.

- Leaders have secure systems in place for teaching phonics. Daily phonics sessions continue throughout the current national restrictions. Teachers check how well pupils, including those at home, are learning to read. Pupils read books matched to the sounds they know. Currently, leaders have prioritised phonics, English and mathematics lessons for children in the early years who are accessing their education remotely. However, children have not received structured support in other subjects. Teachers need to make sure that children access all aspects of the early years curriculum.
- Pupils with SEND receive daily support from trained school staff. Leaders regularly check that this support is effective. They provide training so that staff know which approaches to use. Parents appreciate the help that they receive from you and your team. Teachers create resources such as videos to help parents know how they might support their children. Leaders make sure that pupils with SEND can continue to access sessions with therapists, both in school and at home.
- Governors meet regularly with leaders to decide how to reform and refine curriculum subjects. Recently, the governing body changed the way its meetings are organised. This means that governors can check the on-site and remote education offer that teachers provide. The local authority has delivered training for governors. This has helped the governing body to focus their checks of leaders' work on the right areas.
- Leaders work together with the local authority to improve the school. This has led to opportunities for leaders to work with other organisations. As a result, leaders have improved and embedded new approaches to the delivery of the English and mathematics curriculums. You and your team also work with leaders in other schools to improve the way other subjects are planned and taught. These improvements have started, but progress has been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. We spoke to you, other leaders, pupils, those responsible for governance, a representative of the local authority and the director of Swaledale Teaching School Alliance to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

We also looked at samples of pupils' work and viewed recorded lessons. We looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 16 free-text responses, and four staff questionnaires.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Diocese of Leeds, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for North Yorkshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Andrea Bedeau
Her Majesty's Inspector