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Dear Mr Rahman

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Sprites Primary Academy

Following my remote inspection with Fyfe Johnston, 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 require special measures.

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 require special measures at its previous section 5 inspection. 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:

- ensure that the work of the new middle leadership team is effective, so that more staff within the school can help drive improvement
- further develop curriculum plans so that they set out precisely what content will be taught and when, in subjects such as geography, history and science.

Context

- You joined the school in January 2020. Five new teachers have joined the school since the previous inspection. New phase group leaders and a coordinator for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have recently been appointed.
- The governing body was dissolved by the multi-academy trust prior to the last section 5 inspection. An intervention board is in place to provide external support and challenge.
- A very small number of pupils had to learn remotely at some point in the autumn term 2020.
- Currently around a third of pupils are educated on site. Similar proportions of pupils with SEND and those considered to be vulnerable are learning on site.
- Although places in the nursery were offered to all children on roll, no parents wished to take these up. As a result, the on-site nursery is currently closed.

Main findings

- Leaders have established an effective online system that is enabling pupils to learn remotely. Each week, teachers set pupils tasks that they must complete in English, mathematics and other subjects. Pupils complete extension tasks if they meet these minimum learning expectations. Pupils access live lessons, video material and other online resources and information to complete their work. Pupils in school follow the same curriculum, joining in the same lessons, supported by school staff.
- Phonics is taught daily at the appropriate level for pupils, using pre-recorded videos. Pupils read online books that closely match their phonics knowledge. This is helping them to read more fluently. Teachers are alert to the needs of individuals who are struggling to do so. These pupils are benefiting from extra help.
- All pupils with SEND and those who leaders consider to be vulnerable have been invited to attend school. Leaders make regular contact with pupils whose parents have chosen for them to remain at home. Although leaders ensure that these pupils are given work to complete, the extent to which

support for pupils with SEND meets the needs of individuals is too variable. This means some are better able to learn the curriculum than others.

- A new curriculum was introduced in September 2020. In many subjects, teachers are following this as intended, with a few adjustments that reflect the challenges of remote learning. In physical education, for example, teachers are making sure that pupils take regular exercise rather than teaching them new skills. In some subjects, curriculum plans do not specify clearly enough the most important content that pupils will learn and when they will learn it.
- Recently appointed leaders have not been in post for long enough for the impact of their work to be fully evident. Efforts to improve the school are largely reliant upon a small number of leaders. This is limiting the speed with which improvements are made.
- The trust has provided significant support, which is helping to improve early years provision and the teaching of reading. Plans are in place to further develop mathematics and the curriculum in other subjects.
- The intervention board is working well to support leaders and to hold them to account for standards at the school. Through analysis of information such as parent surveys, the board is able to check on the impact of leaders' actions to promote improvement.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. We spoke to you, other senior leaders, teachers and representatives of the multi-academy trust to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown. We also spoke to the chair of the intervention board, a parent and groups of children.

We reviewed examples of the school's remote learning plans and pupils' work. We saw an example of an intervention session. We looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 29 free-text responses, and 52 staff questionnaires.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer of the REAch2 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

Tessa Holledge
Her Majesty's Inspector