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30 March 2021

Jo Herrero
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Dear Mrs Herrero

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Holy Trinity CofE Primary School

Following my remote inspection with Heather Simpson, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), of your school on 18 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.

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 September 2017.

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:

- review and map out the subject-specific vocabulary that needs to be taught in all subjects across all year groups.

Context

- Since the most recent monitoring inspection, a senior leader has left the school and has been replaced by an existing member of staff. Three newly qualified teachers have joined the school and two teachers are on maternity leave. Four new governors have replaced governing body members who had come to the end of their term of office.
- Between the start of January and 5 March 2021, approximately one third of pupils were educated on site. Almost all vulnerable pupils were attending school. Four fifths of pupils with education, health and care plans attended school on site.
- At the time of this inspection, the Year 3 'bubble' of 60 pupils was self-isolating and being educated at home. All other pupils were attending on site.
- At the time of this inspection, four members of staff were absent from work due to COVID-19 (coronavirus). Leaders were managing these absences internally, as well as using supply staff when required.

Main findings

- Before the pandemic, leaders had made sure that a secure curriculum plan was in place. Over the last year, they have checked that there is progression in pupils' knowledge and skills in all subjects and made changes when required. There has been a successful focus on pupils making links between subjects and drawing on their prior learning. Leaders have continued to develop specific subjects. For example, in science, 'sandwich planning' is now used. Leaders are now planning to audit and map out the subject-specific vocabulary that needs to be taught in all subjects across the school.
- Leaders and staff have made sure that pupils experience a wide and varied curriculum, regardless of whether the pupils have been learning in school or at home. Staff have embraced new ways of working and used technology to deliver the curriculum to the best of their ability. Pupils continued to access the full range of subjects when they were required to work at home. However, teachers prioritised some subjects over others. This was because some lessons and some practical activities are better suited to being taught in school. Teachers have audited subject content to identify areas that were not taught during the lockdown. Missed content will be inserted into suitable topics before moving on to new learning.

- Year 3 pupils, who are currently self-isolating, are accessing the curriculum through the school's established remote offer. Pupils access live lessons and timetabled 'drop-in' sessions where they can talk to members of staff.
- Formal assessments in English and mathematics are planned to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills. More informal assessments, such as quizzes, are planned in other subjects. Teachers will use the findings from these assessments to inform curriculum adaptations. Pupils who need extra help to catch up will receive additional adult support.
- Reading is a strength of the school. Teachers focus closely on reading from the early years to Year 6. Teachers prioritise daily phonics sessions for younger pupils and this continued during lockdown periods. Just before returning to school, teachers checked younger pupils' phonic knowledge through video calls. Due to the quality of the remote offer and support from parents, pupils made strong progress in phonics and there are no major gaps. The English curriculum is rooted in a range of quality texts. Consequently, pupils are exposed to a wide range of reading materials. Enrichment activities, such as the Year 6 book club, continued despite the school being partially closed. Pupils speak enthusiastically about their love of reading.
- Approximately half of the pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) attended school during the most recent lockdown. Leaders say that this group of pupils benefitted from higher levels of support at this time because there were less pupils in school. As a result, these pupils made strong progress. Pupils with SEND, who were working at home, were set work through the remote education offer and staff made regular contact with these families. Leaders have continued to access support from external agencies, although some of this has been carried out remotely.
- Governors have continued to monitor the work of the school. They receive comprehensive information from leaders. Governors have a secure understanding of how the curriculum is designed and they know that sequencing has improved. They are keen to develop their roles further. For example, they intend to gather more information about staff well-being so they can provide better support.
- The local authority supports the school in a variety of ways. This includes termly monitoring visits and bespoke support for the school. The local authority representative knows the school well. She has provided valuable support in relation to the curriculum, leadership and assessment. The local authority representative stated that in the future, leaders and staff from other schools plan to visit Holy Trinity to observe good practice.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. We spoke to you, other senior leaders, a range of curriculum leaders, and leaders responsible for SEND and the early years. Inspectors also spoke with a group of pupils, two members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

We also looked at minutes of governing body meetings and reports from external consultants, including reports from the representative of the local authority. We looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 95 free-text responses, and 47 staff questionnaires.

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

Yours sincerely

Wayne Simner
Her Majesty's Inspector