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Vanessa Wardle
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Dear Miss Wardle

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Pegasus Primary School

Following my remote inspection with Jo Evans, 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 three successive judgements of requires improvement. The school's most recent section 5 inspection took place in November 2019.

Having considered all the evidence and taking into account the impact of COVID-19 (coronavirus) 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:

- revisit previous learning about grammar, spelling and punctuation and help pupils get back into the habit of writing at length
- ensure all pupils can attend school full time on site.

Context

- Senior leadership has remained stable since the previous inspection, and a second assistant principal has been added to the team. Five new teachers and three new governors have been appointed.
- Between the start of the spring term and 5 March 2021, about two thirds of pupils received remote education at some point. This included the very few pupils who have education, health and care plans. During the same period, almost all pupils identified as being vulnerable continued to attend school.
- At the time of this inspection, all pupils were being educated in school. However, most pupils receive remote education on Tuesday afternoon because the school closes early on that day. The school is trialling this temporary arrangement in order to support teachers' collective planning, preparation and assessment time. The school's intended aim is to improve the quality of education.

Main findings

- Throughout the pandemic, leaders have maintained their focus on long-term school improvement. They have continued with their intended improvements to curriculum design, including in English and mathematics. To this end, the staff training programme has gone ahead as planned.
- When remote education was happening daily, school staff had a systematic approach to keeping in touch with home. Consequently, pupils' engagement with remote learning has been high and most pupils have returned to school ready to continue learning in the classroom. Regular communication between home and school about reading, for example, has increased what parents know about the school curriculum. This, in turn, has helped to strengthen parental support and involvement with reading at home. Most pupils have continued to make progress in reading.
- The school has a well-organised, structured approach to the teaching of reading. Staff have been trained so that classroom practice is consistent, and pupils are provided with appropriate books. Throughout the period of partial closure, and currently, reading has remained an important daily activity. Pupils at an early stage of learning to read benefit from informed instruction and daily routines. Pupils who are further ahead with their reading are given

meaningful activities that push them on further. All pupils are encouraged to read for pleasure, and staff organise competitions and other activities to fuel their interest in books. Throughout the school, staff regularly read aloud to pupils and prompt them to share and talk about books they have read and enjoyed.

- While most pupils have kept up with reading, their writing presents more of a mixed picture. As remote education has involved a lot of computer work, some pupils have got out of the habit of writing at length. Pupils' current work shows that aspects of punctuation, spelling, presentation and grammar have slipped. In response, staff are putting on extra handwriting lessons and reminding pupils about previous learning and expectations.
- Currently, the school is offering its usual curriculum, although swimming is still on hold. In reading, writing and mathematics, staff are following the usual programme of spring term assessments. Teachers use information from assessments to shape lessons, and pupils report that teachers give them helpful feedback about how well they are doing. In English, mathematics and science, lessons start with 'connect activities'. These activities usually consist of a few questions that jog pupils' memories to remind them about earlier learning before moving on to something new.
- Throughout the pandemic, the school continued to work with professional services to support pupils and families. Now, staff are reassessing pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to make sure that the right support is in place. Where necessary, staff are providing extra support to boost confidence or learning. In some cases, this has meant time being taken from other curriculum areas, but this is a short-term measure that will be reviewed once pupils are more settled back at school.
- The local governing body and the trust have an informed understanding of the school's improvement priorities. The trust has created subject leader networks so that staff from different schools can work with one another on curriculum design. It is worth noting that Pegasus Primary School staff are now contributing some subject expertise to these networks. The trust has also helped to broker external support. School staff have worked with other schools and trainers to develop curriculum plans and ways of working. All of these actions are improving the quality of education at the school.
- Governors and trust leaders are mindful of pupils' and staff's well-being and have a mix of formal and informal routines for checking on everyone's welfare. Staff report that they feel well supported by leaders.
- Many parents believe that the partnership with home has strengthened in recent times. In their responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, several parents praised the school's attention to their children's welfare and learning during the pandemic. However, a number of parents expressed

dissatisfaction with the current temporary arrangement for continuing remote education on Tuesday afternoons. This arrangement, which had taken place twice at the time of the inspection, means that some pupils remain in the school while other pupils are sent home. This decision is not in the best interests of pupils as this is a time when all pupils should be in school full time.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. We spoke to you, other senior leaders, the chief executive officer and education director of Summit Learning multi-academy trust, teaching staff, pupils, and the chair and two of the local governing body to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

We also looked at information on the school's website and curriculum plans. We observed a reading session. We looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 54 free-text responses, and 10 staff questionnaires.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the chair of the board of trustees, the chief executive officer of Summit Learning multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Birmingham. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Martin Pye
Her Majesty's Inspector