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Emma Tuffey
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Dear Miss Tuffey

Additional monitoring inspection of Fosse Primary School

Following my inspection with Shaheen Hussain (seconded inspector), of your school on 16 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 have serious weaknesses.

Inspectors visited the school site due to significant concerns about safeguarding raised at the previous inspection. The range of evidence available to inspectors was narrower than would normally be the case. 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 have serious weaknesses at its previous section 5 inspection. 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.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders and those responsible for governance should take further action to:

- ensure that subject leaders receive sufficient training to plan and sequence the knowledge that they want pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to learn in all subjects
- employ a range of strategies to improve the attendance of those pupils who do not attend school every day.

Context

- The headteacher left the school in October 2020. You were then appointed as the acting headteacher. A new leader for pupils with SEND joined the school in September 2020. A new, experienced chair and vice chair of governors took up their roles in the autumn term. Since the previous inspection, five governors have left the governing body and have been replaced.
- The school is due to become part of a local multi-academy trust on 1 September 2021.
- Approximately three quarters of pupils were educated at home when the school was closed to most pupils at the start of the spring term. Around half of the vulnerable pupils and the vast majority of pupils with education, health and care plans were in school.
- Currently, a very small number of pupils are being educated remotely.

Main findings

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders and staff have received appropriate training. The online system to record any safeguarding concerns is used well. Any concerns and further actions are clearly recorded. Pupils know there are many adults in school who can help them. The single central record meets current requirements.
- Leaders and those responsible for governance have ensured that pupils have had access to education during the pandemic, including when schools have not been fully open to all pupils. Teachers have used a variety of online and paper-based materials. Pupils have been expected to complete learning in English and mathematics every day. These expectations were shared with pupils, parents and carers. Pupils have undertaken learning in a variety of other subjects in the afternoons. Pupils in key stage 1 have continued to receive daily phonics sessions.
- Leaders have continued to ensure that those pupils who are unable to attend school as a result of COVID-19 can access their education remotely.

- Subject leaders have checked that teachers are covering the national curriculum requirements. The leaders have provided teachers with topic titles to teach in subjects such as science and history. However, the leaders have yet to plan out and sequence the knowledge they want pupils to learn. Subject leaders have not received the training they need to help them to plan the curriculum in all subjects.
- Teachers are beginning to check what pupils have learned. In phonics, for example, staff are spotting the gaps in pupils' knowledge of letter sounds. Pupils then receive extra phonics help should they need it. 'Flashback Fridays' help pupils to revisit learnt content in mathematics. Teachers are not able to check fully what pupils have learnt in those subjects where leaders have not identified what they want pupils to learn and when.
- Leaders responsible for reading have bought new resources to help with the teaching of phonics. Pupils at the early stages of reading have books at the correct level of challenge. Older pupils told us they enjoy reading and do so often.
- The recently appointed special educational needs coordinator has ensured that teachers are supporting pupils with SEND. Teachers ensure that SEND pupils receive appropriate equipment to help them learn. Leaders are using a range of outside agencies to assist those pupils who need specialist support. During the recent lockdown, pupils, including vulnerable pupils and those with SEND, attended extra 'seminars' if they needed additional help. Curriculum plans are not precise enough to identify small steps in learning for pupils with SEND.
- Too many pupils do not attend school every day. This has been an issue for several years. For example, the day before the inspection, 47 pupils were not in school. This is too high. These absences were not related to COVID-19.
- Governors support leaders while holding them to account. For example, they have recently asked leaders about staff well-being. They have checked how staff identify and then support any vulnerable pupils. Governors receive a range of appropriate information from the acting headteacher.
- The local authority asked a local trust to support the school. An adviser from the trust has been working with leaders for two days a week. This work has led to improvements in safeguarding arrangements, the development of remote learning, school improvement planning and the quality of governance.
- During the inspection, leaders amended the content of some policies and documents to take account of the current leadership arrangements.

Evidence

We spoke to you, four governors, including the chair, the trust advisor, the school business manager, a variety of staff, the leaders responsible for early reading, phonics, history, science and pupils with SEND, a representative from the local authority and a group of pupils from Years 5 and 6, to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during the current circumstances.

We listened to pupils from key stages 1 and 2 read. We scrutinised documents and records related to safeguarding. We checked a sample of lesson materials used for remote education. We looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 13 free-text responses, and 44 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 Leicester. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Peter Stonier
Her Majesty's Inspector