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Sarah Moore
Executive Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Moore

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Stillington Primary School

Following my remote inspection with Alex Thorp, 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 special measures.

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 January 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:

- ensure that pupils' learning builds sequentially from year to year and from lesson to lesson in order that pupils gain the important knowledge and skills that they need in a wide range of subjects
- ensure that the responsibilities of governors in checking the work of the school are distributed. This is to ensure that all governors take a full and active role in holding the school's leaders to account for its improvement.

Context

- Since January 2019, there have been significant changes to staffing. The interim headteacher and a temporary class teacher have left the school. Five new members of staff have joined the school, including new members of the senior leadership team and a class teacher. The school has entered into a formal collaboration with a local federation of schools. Both are working exceptionally closely to provide a more comprehensive offer after the section 5 inspection that judged the school to require special measures.
- Approximately three quarters of pupils were educated on site when the school was closed to most pupils at the start of the spring term 2021. At the time of the inspection, almost all of the school's vulnerable pupils and all pupils with education, health and care plans were attending on site.
- Almost all pupils are attending on site at this time.

Main findings

- The executive headteacher, with the support of leaders from the federation of Foston and Terrington Primary Schools, is taking the necessary action to provide education in the current circumstances. Members of the governing body have embraced this collaboration. They are developing strategies to monitor the school's provision closely.
- Leaders have prioritised curriculum development since entering a formal collaboration in September 2020. The established federation curriculum, including its shared values, has been implemented. Federation leaders have been helping teachers to develop consistent approaches to the teaching of all subjects within the mixed-age classes. There are now clear timetables for learning. Teachers have benefitted from shared planning, training and the opportunity to visit other classes within the federation. Leaders must ensure that learning builds sequentially in order that pupils gain the important knowledge and skills they need in a wide range of subjects.
- Leaders plan to use a range of assessments to identify any gaps in reading, writing and mathematics. This will support teachers in identifying next steps in pupils' learning. This work began while pupils were still working remotely at

the start of the spring term 2021. Leaders are now considering how to replicate this for foundation subjects, such as history and geography.

- There is now an ambitious and sequenced early reading curriculum in place. Most recently, the phonics knowledge of all pupils has been assessed. Those pupils at risk of falling behind are receiving additional phonics input to revisit prior learning.
- The special educational needs and disabilities coordinator (SENDCo) continues to provide additional support for pupils who are shielding. The provision of this work is well matched to their specific learning needs. Leaders have a clear strategy for remote education should further pupils need to isolate.
- Recent restructuring of the leadership team has meant that the school now has an experienced and knowledgeable cross federation SENDCo. This leader has ensured that suitable systems are in place to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and vulnerable pupils. Parents compliment the sensitive approaches leaders use to engage and support their children.
- Members of the governing body are knowledgeable. Refined systems are in early development to hold senior leaders to account. These are led by the chair of governors who is well placed to ensure ownership of these systems is more evenly distributed. This should enable all governors to take a full and active role. There is currently an imbalance in those taking leading roles. Governors know the future priorities for this school. They are also aware of the impact of Covid-19 and the legacy of poor teaching on pupils' learning.
- The local authority has a realistic view of the work leaders need to do in order to secure stability in this school. North Yorkshire County Council has been instrumental in fostering the school's partnership with a local federation. Support and challenge from this federation has enhanced the current education provision. These leaders continue to work closely with teachers in supporting the development of the curriculum. Federation leaders have a clear understanding of the school's priorities.

Evidence

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

We looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including six free-text responses, and 12 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 North Yorkshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Marcus Newby
Her Majesty's Inspector