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21 April 2021

Kelly Williams  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Williams

### **Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Ferney Lee Primary School**

Following my remote inspection with Tim Scargill-Knight, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), of your school on 25 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 May 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 curriculum plans specify what pupils need to know and remember in subjects other than English and mathematics
- ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are appropriately supported to access age-appropriate content in mathematics.

## **Context**

- Since the last inspection, two teachers have left the school and one has joined. In addition, four governors have left the school and three new governors have taken up post. There are currently two governors in the process of being appointed.
- At the start of the spring term, when the school was closed to most pupils, approximately two thirds of pupils were educated at home. Three quarters of vulnerable pupils attended school. Most pupils with education, health and care plans were attending on site.
- Currently, the majority of pupils are attending school. At the time of this inspection, a small number of pupils were self-isolating due to COVID-19.

## **Main findings**

- Leaders and those responsible for governance have a clear vision for the school. You continue to focus on a curriculum that 'sparks interest and curiosity'. Phonics and mathematics have been your priorities since the last inspection. Over the coming term, leaders intend to identify and sequence the key knowledge that pupils will know and remember in other subjects.
- During the most recent period of national restrictions, leaders adapted and reordered parts of the curriculum. You identified subject content that you felt was more difficult to teach online and moved these units of work to later in the academic year. For example, you moved the teaching of fractions in mathematics to when all pupils returned to school. Pupils have continued to access phonics sessions, remotely and in school. For pupils learning at home, phonics lessons delivered by a familiar adult increased pupil engagement. In addition, teachers identified pupils who needed extra support. Pupils were able to keep up through individual and group sessions. Parents' experience of online learning has been positive. One parent commented, 'I found Ferney Lee to support my child well, both educationally and emotionally, online and through phone conversations.'
- Pupils who are currently self-isolating access the same work as other pupils in school. Pupils with SEND who are self-isolating receive daily, live sessions. These sessions link to pupils' targets on their education plans. This helps them to keep on track with the curriculum.

- Since all pupils returned in March 2021, leaders have considered parts of the curriculum not taught. Teachers plan to teach the missed content over the next term. You have checked on what pupils have remembered in phonics and mathematics. Teachers have not checked what pupils have remembered in other subjects. This is because you are refining your curriculum for subjects like geography and physical education.
- You continue to prioritise phonics in a variety of ways. As a result of checks on what pupils know, leaders have decided to increase the amount of time teachers spend teaching phonics. Teachers offer targeted support to pupils who need it in extra afternoon booster sessions. In Reception, you have identified gaps in children’s speech and language. Staff have received training from a speech and language therapist. This is to help them deliver specific interventions to support these children.
- Leaders know their children well. You work with families to support the most vulnerable. Throughout the pandemic, you have kept in touch with families. Support from external agencies, such as physiotherapists, has continued.
- The special educational needs coordinator has made sure that support plans for each pupil with SEND are in place. However, the ambition of the curriculum and quality of support has not been checked for these pupils. Expectations of what some pupils can achieve are not high enough, particularly in mathematics.
- Recently, there have been a number of new appointments to the governing body. This, coupled with recent training, has improved governors’ capacity to challenge leaders’ decisions. Governors now know the school well and know what it needs to do to improve. They have ‘kept a careful eye’ on certain subjects, such as mathematics. Governors seek the views of parents as part of their overall checks on the school.
- Leaders have benefited from the support provided by the local authority. This support includes checking on leaders’ actions to improve the school. Regular meetings have continued once a term.

## **Evidence**

This inspection was conducted remotely. We spoke to you, other senior leaders, the chair of the governing body, 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 also carried out reviews of some curriculum plans. We looked at responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Parent View, including 30 free-text responses and 19 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 Calderdale. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jenny Thomas  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**