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Dear Miss Bilton

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Wallsend St. Peter's CofE Aided Primary School

Following my remote inspection with Alison Stephenson, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), of your school on 17 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 at its previous section 5 inspections. The school's most recent section 5 inspection took place in September 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 governors provide leaders with appropriate support, and hold them to account for the impact of their actions
- execute a clear plan to monitor the implementation and impact of the curriculum
- ensure that there are higher expectations for the proportion of pupils developing secure phonics knowledge in key stage 1, so that more pupils enter key stage 2 as fluent readers.

Context

- Since the last inspection, there have been several changes to the governing body, including the appointment of a new chairperson. Several existing staff have taken on different areas of responsibility. The assistant headteacher is seconded from another school until August 2021. A part-time special educational needs and disabilities coordinator (SENDCo) has been appointed. The recruitment process for the appointment of a new deputy headteacher is ongoing.
- Approximately two thirds of pupils were educated at home when the school was closed to most pupils at the start of the spring term. Two thirds of vulnerable pupils and a third of pupils with an education, health and care plan attended on site.
- At the time of this inspection, all pupils were attending on site.
- At the time of this inspection, leaders were not dealing with significant staffing issues.

Main findings

- When all pupils returned to school, staff needed to remind pupils about school expectations for behaviour and attitudes to learning. Nurture activities are used to promote pupils' well-being and mental health. Alongside this, pupils are being taught all the subjects from their usual curriculum. Pupils have quickly settled back into the routines of school life. Leaders were pleased to see the impact of their previous work on personal development on pupils' resilience.
- Leaders have worked with teachers to develop a new curriculum which identifies the knowledge and skills they want pupils to learn in each year group. They have considered the key things that pupils need to remember in each year. Reasonable changes have been made to the sequence of learning in some subjects because of the need for some pupils to learn remotely earlier in the year. For example, in art the sculpting unit that was planned for

the early spring term was retained for later in the year. This was because pupils may not have had access to appropriate resources at home.

- This new curriculum has not been taught for a full year and leaders are aware that there may be further work to do on sequencing. Subject leaders are beginning to check work in pupils' books and to carry out other monitoring activities. However, the plan which senior leaders have to check on the implementation and impact of this curriculum is at an early stage of development.
- Assessments in English and mathematics have taken place to identify what pupils have learned and remembered from the taught curriculum. Leaders are using this information to inform their planning for the rest of this year. They have also identified what they consider to be essential knowledge in each curriculum area. They are using this to adapt their plans for the summer term. They ask teachers to check pupils' retention of prior learning at the beginning of each lesson and to adapt their lessons accordingly. The aim is to make sure that pupils have the knowledge they need to access learning in the next year group in September.
- Leaders have thought carefully about their reading offer to make sure that it meets the needs of pupils. They are helping pupils to develop a love of reading by giving them access to a wide range of books and daily story time sessions. All staff have received some reading training and further work on phonics is planned. Pupils have a daily phonics or reading lesson. This is supplemented with one-to-one reading and catch-up sessions. Pupils in the early stages of learning to read have decodable books which match their phonics knowledge. However, leaders need to have higher ambitions for pupils who struggle to learn to read. They need to make sure that more pupils enter key stage 2 as fluent readers.
- The new SENDCo is in the early stages of implementing a plan to improve the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This plan shows how support will be arranged and monitored for impact over the rest of the academic year. Other vulnerable pupils are continuing to receive effective support.
- Over time, governors have not held leaders to account for their actions. They do not know the school well enough to carry out their strategic role effectively. The new chair is beginning to address this by considering how governors can gain the knowledge they need to provide suitable support and challenge.
- The local authority and the diocese work together to provide leaders with support and challenge. They have strengthened the work of leaders in developing the curriculum and current education provision. Their overall aim

is to make sure that planned learning meets the needs of the pupils. The next step they have planned is to measure the full impact of this work.

Evidence

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

We also considered a small sample of pupils' work, leaders' monitoring and curriculum planning. We also observed pupils reading to a familiar adult. We looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including five free-text responses, and 20 staff questionnaires.

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

Yours sincerely

Chris Cook
Her Majesty's Inspector