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Stephen Jefferson
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Dear Mr Jefferson

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Chetwynde School

Following my remote inspection with Sheila Iwaskow, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), and John Nixon, HMI, of your school on 30 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 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:

- overcome the delay caused by the pandemic to ensure that subject curriculum plans identify and appropriately sequence the knowledge that you want pupils to know and remember
- ensure that all staff receive high-quality phonics training so that they can support pupils to become confident readers.

Context

- The school is an all-through school for children and pupils aged between four and 16.
- Since the previous inspection, the chair of trustees and four trustees resigned. The head of primary, the subject leader for design and technology, one teacher and seven support staff have left the school. A new chair of trustees, a new co-chair of trustees and six new trustees have been appointed. One new teacher and 12 support staff have joined the school. The school is due to join a new multi-academy trust in September 2021.
- Approximately nine in every 10 pupils were educated at home at the start of the spring term 2021. During this time, approximately one third of all vulnerable pupils, including just over a third of pupils with an education, health and care plan, were attending on site.
- At the time of this inspection, almost all pupils were attending school. A small proportion of pupils were self-isolating and continuing their education remotely.

Main findings

- In the autumn term 2020, you and the school's leaders took effective action to ensure that all pupils had access to their usual curriculum, whether they were working at home or in school. Leaders trained pupils and staff in how to use the school's remote education systems. This meant that pupils and teachers could move seamlessly and safely to remote education when needed. The small proportion of pupils who are currently self-isolating continue to follow their usual timetable. These pupils can submit work and receive feedback from their teachers. As a result, leaders and trustees are ensuring that pupils continue to receive an education in the current circumstances.
- In the summer term 2020, leaders made changes to the curriculum so that pupils in all years can study music. Senior leaders began to work with subject leaders across the school to create curriculum plans that identify what pupils need to learn and in what order. In the autumn term, this work was delayed

due to the pandemic. Consequently, leaders' work to develop and implement well-structured curriculum plans is still at an early stage.

- Since September 2020, subject leaders have carefully adapted the curriculum to cover the knowledge that pupils have missed or forgotten. Since pupils have returned to school in March 2021, teachers have prioritised those practical activities that pupils have not been able to do at home. For example, in music, pupils in Year 8 are learning to play the keyboard.
- Teachers use a range of effective strategies to check what pupils have remembered. Teachers use this information to make suitable adaptations to curriculum content. They provide appropriate support for those pupils who need additional help to recover lost learning. For example, in the Reception Year, teachers have noticed that children are not as far along in developing their fine motor skills as they usually would be at this time in the year. Consequently, teachers have changed the curriculum to help these children to develop their writing skills.
- Teaching pupils to become confident and fluent readers is a priority for leaders. There is a consistent approach to delivering the phonics curriculum across the school. Children in the early years and pupils in key stage 1 access daily phonics lessons, whether they are at home or in school. Pupils read books that closely match the sounds that they have learned. Teachers provide appropriate support to those pupils who struggle with their reading to help them to catch up quickly. However, some staff have not received suitable phonics training. This hinders them from providing pupils with the support that they need to become confident and fluent readers.
- Teachers provide regular additional lessons in English, mathematics and science to pupils in Year 11. This is helping these pupils to catch up with any learning that they have missed or forgotten. Year 11 pupils benefit from appropriate advice and guidance to prepare them well for the next stage of education, employment or training. This includes impartial support from a careers adviser.
- You and other school leaders have prioritised vulnerable pupils' welfare effectively throughout the pandemic. For example, staff have contacted vulnerable pupils, and their parents and carers regularly. Leaders have ensured that this group of pupils benefit from extensive pastoral and educational support.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have benefited from additional support during the pandemic. This has helped to build pupils' confidence when returning to school. Pupils with SEND follow the same curriculum as other pupils. Well-trained staff provide targeted support to help this group of pupils to catch up with their learning when needed.

- The board of trustees have an accurate knowledge of the school's strengths and those areas that require further development. Trustees provide you and other leaders with appropriate challenge and support. For instance, trustees meet with you and other leaders regularly to provide effective challenge around your work to develop subject curriculum plans.
- You have accessed a wide range of support from external partners. A national leader of governance has delivered training for trustees. As a result, trustees are increasingly effective in holding you and other leaders to account. An external adviser from a local school is providing appropriate challenge and support around leaders' work to develop the curriculum. The local authority has supported leaders to promote the needs of vulnerable pupils effectively.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. We held meetings with you and other senior leaders. We met with groups of subject leaders and teachers. We also met with representatives from the board of trustees, and a representative from the local authority to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

We scrutinised leaders' curriculum plans. We reviewed pre-recorded videos of pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 reading to a familiar adult. We spoke with pupils in key stages 2, 3 and 4 about their experiences of learning in school and remotely. We reviewed a selection of minutes from trustees' meetings. We also reviewed 123 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 67 free-text responses, and 39 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.

I am copying this letter to the co-chairs of the board of trustees, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Cumbria. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Linda Emmett
Her Majesty's Inspector