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6 May 2021

Claire Bright  
Headteacher  
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Lancashire  
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Dear Miss Bright

### **Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Castle View Primary School**

Following my remote inspection with Janette Walker, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), 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 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 December 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:

- address delays caused by the pandemic so that the recently introduced subject curriculum plans are fully implemented and carefully monitored
- embed the strategies introduced to improve pupils' behaviour.

### **Context**

- There have been several changes to staffing and governance since the previous inspection. Five teachers have left the school, including a member of the leadership team. Governors have appointed two teachers and an acting deputy headteacher. The governing body has appointed a new chair and vice chair.
- When the school was closed to most pupils at the start of the spring term, approximately one fifth of pupils were educated on site. This included two thirds of vulnerable pupils and most pupils with an education, health and care plan.
- At the time of this inspection, about two thirds of pupils were attending on site. Children in the Reception class 'bubble' and pupils in the Year 1 and Year 2 class bubbles were being educated at home.
- At the time of this inspection, one quarter of staff were absent due to COVID-19. These staff were continuing to teach their classes remotely.

### **Main findings**

- You have successfully completed some key actions to lay the foundations for school improvement. You have stabilised the staff team. Alongside this, you have prioritised improvements to the reading curriculum. You have begun to improve curriculum planning in all subjects. Recently, essential learning in English and mathematics has been prioritised. Your actions are helping pupils catch up on missed and forgotten learning. They are also ensuring that pupils continue their education in the current circumstances.
- By the start of the pandemic, you had improved the reading curriculum. You trained teachers to plan and deliver well-sequenced lessons based on high-quality texts. In recent months, you have introduced a new approach to the teaching of phonics. You have provided staff with the training and resources that they need to deliver the phonics programme well. This includes books that match the sounds that pupils know. That said, not all pupils engaged with the daily phonics sessions that were provided during the period when the school was closed to most pupils. You have plans to help these pupils catch up quickly when they return to school following the current bubble closures.

- You have developed subject leaders' knowledge and understanding of how to plan the subjects that they lead. New plans are in place for science, geography and history. These plans build on pupils' prior knowledge from early years to Year 6, for example by developing pupils' chronological knowledge in history and fieldwork skills in geography. Owing to restrictions imposed by COVID-19, subject leaders have not been able to check how well teachers are delivering the new curriculum. Nor have they been able to check on how well pupils can remember what they have been taught.
- The three national lockdowns have resulted in gaps in pupils' learning in English and mathematics. Consequently, teachers are prioritising these subjects. More time is currently being devoted to these subjects. This means that less time is being spent on delivering the curriculum for other subjects. This is causing an additional delay to your plans to implement all of the new curriculum.
- Those children and pupils who are self-isolating continue to study the school's usual curriculum. They have access to daily pre-recorded phonics lessons which build on what they already know. You have carefully chosen the way that you deliver online learning so that teachers can engage with pupils and support them with their learning.
- The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) has improved the way staff identify pupils' additional needs. The SENCo has also begun to develop the way pupils with special educational needs (SEND) are supported, for example by helping pupils to manage their emotions and settle back into school. Some pupils found this especially difficult early in the autumn term 2020. This had a significant impact on their behaviour. In response, you introduced a more consistent approach to promoting pupils' positive behaviour. Staff spoke favourably about the impact of these changes on pupils' attitudes to learning. However, the partial closure of the school during the spring term meant there was not enough time to fully embed these changes. You intend to revisit the new approach now that all pupils are back in school.
- Despite the restrictions imposed by COVID-19, you have made sure that you provided governors with the information that they need to understand what the school does well and what needs to improve. Governors want the best for all pupils. They challenge and support you and other leaders to achieve this. For example, governors asked you to justify your recent plans to change the way that phonics is taught. They fully supported you in making this change as they felt it would improve how pupils are taught to read.
- Leaders at all levels benefit from a range of external support. Initially, the local authority supported you to tackle long-standing staffing issues. More recently, a multi-academy trust has provided support as part of the process of the school becoming an academy. Leaders have benefited from support from the trust in developing the curriculum. Notably, the trust has helped you

and other leaders to continue the improvements to the reading curriculum.

## **Evidence**

We conducted this inspection remotely. We spoke to you, the acting deputy headteacher, subject leaders, staff, pupils and governors to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown. We also met with a representative of the local authority and the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust that has provided school improvement support.

We looked at a wide range of documentation, including curriculum plans, and minutes of meetings of the governing body. We talked to pupils and observed pupils from Year 3 read to a trusted adult. We also considered the responses of 18 staff to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.

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

Yours sincerely

Jackie Stillings  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**