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Ms Rebecca Leek
Executive Headteacher
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Dear Ms Leek

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Cliff Lane Primary School

Following my remote inspection with Katherine Douglas, 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 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 January 2020.

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 all teachers confidently maximise the use of information which the school has gathered to ensure that pupils who are identified as needing to catch up are supported well to do so.

Context

- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher and the early years leader have left the school. You have been appointed as the substantive executive headteacher and the deputy headteacher was appointed as head of school. The head of school is currently on maternity leave and this is being covered by a senior leader from the trust.
- Throughout the spring term, 82% of pupils were learning at home. At that time, 65% of vulnerable pupils and 55% of pupils with an education, health and care plan were in school.
- At the time of this inspection 97% of pupils were in school.
- At the time of the inspection members of staff were absent due to being clinically extremely vulnerable. Leaders said they were able to manage this.

Main findings

- Leaders have ensured that they have provided an education for all pupils in the current circumstances. There was a smooth transition to remote learning during the most current lockdown. Digital devices, paper packs or the option of pupils coming into school were all available. More recently, pupils say they love being back in school. They also appreciated the support given to them while they were learning from home. Parents typically said they were happy with the support and leaders' remote learning offer before the school fully reopened for pupils on 8 March 2021.
- Leaders have worked alongside staff to develop a curriculum that is based on the emotional, social and academic success of pupils. During lockdown and currently, pupils have had access to a full range of subjects. Delivery of parts of the curriculum has been different when pupils were learning from home. For example, in physical education there have been more fitness challenges. In design and technology teachers planned lessons using equipment that pupils could access at home.
- The curriculum has been planned and taught with a focus on pupils knowing and remembering more. Teachers make sure they use important vocabulary which pupils need to know, and revisit previously taught knowledge each lesson. Use of digital resources used for remote teaching is continuing now that all pupils are back in school. Teachers have used standardised tests and informal assessments to check pupils' knowledge. However, teachers do not

fully use the wide range of ongoing information they have well enough to help pupils catch up. As a result, a larger proportion of pupils are needing interventions.

- Reading has been a priority throughout the school. Pupils are well supported in their early reading skills and encouraged to develop a love of reading. Pupils in Reception and key stage 1 have phonics sessions each day. Pupils in Year 2 through to Year 6 have a daily whole-class reading lesson. These lessons focus on learning a separate reading skill each day of the week. When hearing pupils read, learning support assistants support pupils well, asking appropriate questions and encouraging pupils to self-correct. This support helps pupils to improve their reading skills, so they are able to read fluently.
- Leaders are positive about the strong relationships they have with families. Leaders are clear about the vulnerabilities of pupils in their school. Leaders act quickly when following up concerns. Some vulnerable pupils have been anxious about returning to school. Where this is the case, staff have used appropriate strategies, including for example play therapy, to support these pupils to ensure that they successfully return to school.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have been well supported when learning at home and in school. Where individual curriculum plans are in place, the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) has continued to assess pupils and review these plans so they meet pupils' needs. Leaders' work with external agencies has not stopped. Leaders say that all pupils with SEND have returned to school well and are accessing their learning alongside their peers.
- Governors are ambitious for the school. They have continued to carry out their responsibilities around safeguarding and checking education is being provided at this time. Staff and pupils' well-being have been a priority for the governing body. They know the school well and are aware of what leaders need to do next. They ask relevant questions to check that leaders' actions are making a difference.
- The trust has effectively supported the school with leadership capacity and training, for example to support curriculum development, reading and governance. Trust leaders are keen to develop members of staff and use them across other trust schools. Some staff have accessed external training and networking opportunities, particularly in developing early years, mathematics and leadership. This is helping to improve these aspects throughout the school.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. We spoke to you, other senior leaders, the chief executive officer (CEO), pupils, staff and representatives of those responsible

for governance to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

We also looked at minutes of governing body meetings, examples of remote learning and a sample of school documentation. We looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 86 free-text responses, and 50 staff questionnaires.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the chair of the board of trustees and the CEO of the Asset Education multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Suffolk. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Isabel Davis
Her Majesty's Inspector