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Philip Hughes
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Dear Mr Hughes

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Crumpsall Lane Primary School

Following my remote inspection with Claire Cropper, 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 four 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:

- monitor the implementation of the new curriculum plans across all year groups, including early years, to check that they are having the desired impact
- accurately identify the key knowledge that children in the early years and pupils from Years 1 to 6 need to regain in order to minimise the impact of the pandemic on their learning.

Context

- Since January 2020, two new governors have joined the governing body. You took up your post as the executive headteacher. The roles and responsibilities within school have been revised. This includes the role of the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo).
- At the start of the spring term 2021, just under two thirds of the pupils were educated at home. Most of the pupils with an education, health and care plan (EHC plan) attended school, along with the majority of those pupils identified as vulnerable.
- At the time of the inspection, almost all pupils were attending school. A small proportion of pupils have not returned to school. They are self-isolating. This group of pupils are accessing education remotely.
- A small proportion of staff continue to work from home following medical advice.

Main findings

- Prior to the pandemic, leaders introduced new curriculum plans which clearly set out what pupils should learn and when they will be taught this content. Training for staff ensured that they have the knowledge that they need to deliver the curriculum effectively. That said, leaders' checks on the implementation of the new curriculum have been delayed due to the pandemic. As a result, you are not fully aware if these plans are having the desired impact.
- At the start of the third national lockdown, leaders identified the key curriculum content that could be delivered remotely. Teachers adapted their curriculum plans well. This ensured that during the spring term 2021, pupils learning from home, and those pupils attending school, continued to benefit from an education. Children in the early years and pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 studied the school's usual broad range of subjects.

- Following recent training on how to use assessment information effectively, you and the staff are beginning to check what children in the early years and pupils from Years 1 to 6 remember of their prior learning. This is starting to help teachers to identify the essential knowledge that pupils need to regain across a range of curriculum subjects, including English and mathematics. You plan for teachers to use this information to adapt curriculum content in order to help pupils get back on track.
- Training for staff has ensured that daily phonics sessions are delivered systematically for pupils learning in school or at home. The correct pronunciation of letter sounds helps children in the early years, and pupils in key stage one, to read the sounds that letters make correctly. Teachers frequently check the sounds that pupils remember. This allows teachers to closely match the books that pupils read to the sounds that they know. This, in turn, is helping pupils to regain their confidence and fluency when reading.
- Pupils in key stage 2 who are at the early stages of reading benefited from being in school during the spring term 2021. It has helped them to overcome many of the gaps in their phonics knowledge. In their role as reading ambassadors, older pupils encourage other pupils to read widely and often. Teachers continue to deliver daily story sessions for pupils in school and at home. These sessions are very popular and help to reignite pupils' love of reading for pleasure.
- During the pandemic, you and the staff have engaged well with parents and carers. This has helped to relieve parents' anxiety about their children returning to school. Vulnerable pupils benefit from the additional support that they receive with their learning, particularly in mathematics.
- Leaders ensure that a small group of pupils who continue to learn from home have the resources that they need to access their learning effectively until they are able to return to school.
- The SENCo provides clear guidance, training and support for staff. This ensures that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well in their learning. Pupils with SEND benefited positively from working with familiar adults in school. This is helping them to catch up with their learning. You ensure that pupils with an EHC plan continue to receive specialist support from external agencies despite the current restrictions.
- Governors use their knowledge and experience well. Your detailed reports keep governors well informed about your work, and the work of staff, to provide an education for pupils during the current circumstances. Consequently, governors are well placed to provide challenge and support in equal measure. They are also mindful of the additional workload for you and your staff.

- You and the staff engage well with the local authority and the support from an external consultant. These productive partnerships are helping curriculum leaders to lead their subjects more effectively. Work with the English hub has contributed to an improved curriculum for early reading, including phonics.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. We spoke to you, other senior leaders, 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 the current restrictions.

We spoke with a group of pupils and listened to a group of pupils read. We also reviewed documentation linked to governance and the curriculum. We looked at 10 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including seven free-text responses, and reviewed 42 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 Manchester. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Amanda Stringer
Her Majesty's Inspector