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15 March 2021

Jamie Liddell
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Dear Mr Liddell

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of St Martin's C of E Voluntary Aided Primary School

Following my remote inspection with Nathan Kemp, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), of your school on 23 February 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 May 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 leaders, including subject leaders, set clear milestones to monitor and evaluate the impact of actions to improve the curriculum, including in the early years
- ensure that the special educational needs register is accurate and enables pupils to get the support they need.

Context

- There have been significant staffing changes since the last section 5 inspection. A special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) was appointed in September 2019. The executive headteacher left at the end of the summer term 2020. You joined the school as headteacher in September 2020. An interim executive board was appointed by the Department for Education. A new subject leader for English took up post at the same time. The deputy headteacher, who had been acting headteacher, returned to her previous role.
- Across the autumn term 2020, approximately 10% of pupils experienced a period of remote learning.
- At the time of this inspection, 80% of pupils were being educated at home. Approximately 30% of vulnerable pupils and 75% of pupils with education, health and care plans were attending on site.

Main findings

- You and your leadership team have made it a priority that pupils receive an education under the current circumstances at home and in school. This provision is in line with the usual school curriculum. Senior leaders undertake significant work to ensure the curriculum meets the needs of pupils. Some staff are having further support with this, particularly as you implement new initiatives across the school.
- Leaders are rightly prioritising consistency of teaching in the core subjects of reading, writing and mathematics. At the beginning of the autumn term 2020, you introduced a new approach to the teaching of mathematics and, more recently, for writing. However, subject leaders do not have a clear enough understanding of the impact of these approaches on pupils' learning and the quality of teaching. Monitoring to improve curriculum delivery and measure impact, including in the early years, is not fully embedded.
- All staff, including senior leaders, have had recent training to deliver phonics consistently across the school. You have invested in reading books that match pupils' phonics knowledge closely. Pupils receive daily lessons, both in school

and remotely. However, oversight of pupils on the phonics programme in key stage 2 who need to catch up is not sufficiently secure.

- You have ensured that vulnerable pupils and the children of key workers on site receive the same education as the pupils at home. You and your staff maintain regular and timely contact with families. As a result, the number of vulnerable pupils attending school has increased.
- You have provided electronic devices for those pupils who need them. Work packs are systematically sent out to support remote learning. Parents speak highly of the communication and support the school provides.
- The SENCo guides teachers to provide support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Work is tailored to the needs of pupils based on their school-set targets. Leaders, with the help of external support, are prioritising a review of the SEND register to ensure it is accurate so that the support pupils receive meets their needs effectively.
- The recently appointed interim executive board is providing effective support and challenge to leaders. New governance structures are in place; these are enabling governors to be systematic in the way they hold leaders to account. There is regular monitoring of the remote learning provision and attendance. Governors acknowledge that they need to work more on strategic development to move the school forward.
- The school is receiving high levels of support from the local authority. This support is regular and timely. Subject leaders in English and mathematics receive support from local English and mathematics hubs. This support is beginning to have a positive impact.

Evidence

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

We also looked at the work of pupils, reviewed school documentation and recent monitoring documents from the local authority. We looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 12 free-text responses, and 24 staff questionnaires.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the interim executive board, the director of education for the Diocese of Salisbury, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Wiltshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Heather Barraclough
Her Majesty's Inspector