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5 May 2021

Kelly Hunter
Headteacher
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Dear Miss Hunter

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Kingshurst Primary School

Following my remote inspection with Adam Vincent, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), of your school on 24 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 June 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 planning for the wider curriculum considers the knowledge that leaders want pupils to know and remember
- develop senior and middle leaders' ability to evaluate the impact of their actions
- improve governors' understanding of the impact of the school's curriculum.

Context

- You were appointed as headteacher after the school's last inspection and took up the position in September 2019.
- A new chair of governors was elected in September 2019.
- During the spring term 2021, 37% of pupils were attending on site. Of those considered vulnerable, 98% were in attendance. All pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan attended the school each day.
- At the time of this inspection, all pupils had returned to school.

Main findings

- Leaders used an online platform to set pupils' work during the third national lockdown in the spring term. This move to remote education was managed collaboratively with parents and carers. Leaders made the decision to limit the number of live lessons being delivered. Teachers uploaded pre-recorded lessons for pupils to follow each day. Leaders report that pupil engagement throughout the third national lockdown was low. Since returning, pupils are following a 'recovery' curriculum. This is designed to support teachers in understanding gaps in pupils' knowledge. It focuses on the core knowledge that leaders want pupils to know by the end of the spring term in all subjects.
- Leaders had established new planning in English, reading and mathematics by January 2020. They had reviewed these subjects and decided on the core knowledge they wanted pupils to know and remember. Staff training focused on improving teachers' subject knowledge and how to deliver the curriculum. The pandemic has limited leaders' ability to implement new planning in the wider curriculum. Subjects such as geography and science are further forward. However, others are not. Art, music, and design and technology still need attention. Leaders are coaching subject leaders to map out the key knowledge and skills they want pupils to study. The timescale for ensuring that this work is completed is not yet defined.
- Teachers are checking on what pupils have learned and remembered using different approaches. In mathematics and reading, pupils sit formal tests.

However, leaders have not checked whether the tests precisely cover the curriculum content that has been taught. During the recent restrictions, pupils have begun to complete quizzes online. Teachers have used the answers to understand what pupils have remembered while learning at home. Checks to help teachers recognise pupils' knowledge of the wider curriculum are still in development.

- Leaders have supported teachers to develop a 'recovery' curriculum in all subjects. This adaptation of the curriculum is planned until the end of the summer term. Leaders have published these curriculum plans on the school's website. However, some of these plans are too broad and set unrealistic time scales. Leaders have not identified how they will evaluate the impact of these plans on pupils' achievement.

- A comprehensive phonics programme has been implemented since the last inspection. Pupils are given books to read that match the sounds that they are currently learning. All staff have received phonics training. Leaders are working hard to improve the culture of reading. Pupils spoke positively to inspectors about enjoying story time at the end of the day.

- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities continue to receive the additional therapy that they require. For instance, speech and language interventions are being delivered by teaching assistants. Leaders are working with the local authority to support vulnerable pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. They plan to create a nurture provision within the school to cater for vulnerable pupils' wider well-being and development.

- Governors have provided leaders with support during the current circumstances. They communicated with parents to help shape the remote learning offer. Currently, the governors' collective understanding of the impact of the school's curriculum is not well developed. Leaders provide information about curriculum development, but governors do not assure themselves of the impact of its implementation.

- The local authority provides support to school leaders. The headteacher has a mentor from another local school. Leaders benefit from working alongside a partner school with a focus on curriculum development. A teaching school is currently supporting leaders to improve their ability to evaluate the impact of school improvement actions.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. We spoke to you, other senior leaders, pupils, 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 a national lockdown.

We looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including eight free-text responses, and 62 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 Solihull. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Daniel-John Constable
Her Majesty's Inspector