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10 March 2021

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Dear Miss Maclennan

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Woolavington Village Primary School

Following my remote inspection with Marie Thomas, 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.

Following changes to government guidance and the imposition of COVID-19 (coronavirus) lockdown restrictions, 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 at its previous section 5 inspections. The school's most recent section 5 inspection took place in December 2018.

Having considered all the evidence and taking into account the impact of COVID-19 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:

- provide opportunities for middle leaders to develop their skills and sharpen curriculum planning
- ensure that teachers check the progress that pupils are making across all subjects routinely.

Context

- Since September 2020, there has been some turbulence in leadership and staffing. A new chair of governors has been appointed. The assistant headteacher is now the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo). In January 2021, you recruited a new English leader and another teacher.
- Across the autumn term 2020, a small number of pupils in different year groups experienced a period of remote education due to COVID-19.
- At the time of this inspection, 28% of pupils were attending school. Approximately 55% of vulnerable pupils and 75% of pupils with education, health and care plans were also learning in school.

Main findings

- When schools partially closed on 23 March 2020, you put in place plans to deliver a remote and on-site education. You have provided pupils with resources, such as laptops. This has ensured that pupils working at home can access the curriculum. Pupils are benefiting from a multi-media approach, whether they are learning at home or in school.
- At the start of September 2020, you introduced a new curriculum. As a result, of COVID-19 this has been somewhat challenging for you and your staff. In January 2021, you made the decision to change the approach to teaching writing. You recognise that the curriculum is in its infancy and that subject leaders need to develop their skills so they can improve the quality of the curriculum further.
- Teachers have changed the order of teaching in music, physical education (PE), science, and art and design. However, teachers are not checking that pupils have remembered important knowledge and understand what they have learned routinely whether they are working remotely or at school.
- The mathematics curriculum is more developed than other subjects. You have introduced effective systems to check what pupils know before moving on to new topics. However, these checks are not in place in other subjects, such as geography and science. You have identified that some pupils' ability to recall number facts from memory is not where you would like it to be. You have suitable plans in place to provide additional support to help pupils catch up.

- You have put effective systems in place to check on pupils' participation when working remotely. Most pupils complete the work that teachers provide. However, when pupils are not engaging as well as you would like, you provide additional support to the family.

- Vulnerable and key worker children complete the same work as pupils who are working remotely. They have additional adult support in their 'bubbles' and are keen to learn. Pupils who spoke with an inspector said: 'Teachers can focus more on us and we can concentrate better in school.' This is working well to provide them with extra help with their learning.

- Since the last inspection, you have implemented a new approach to reading. You continue to prioritise the teaching of reading and phonics. It is well structured and organised. This enables pupils in key stage 1 and children in the early years to make links between letters and the sounds they make. Staff provide parents with a range of resources and support so that pupils at home can access their reading lessons. Teachers share pre-recorded videos to help with early reading skills and provide daily live whole-class reading sessions.

- Most pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities currently attend school and receive extra support in class. Nevertheless, teachers have adapted the curriculum so that pupils who are working remotely have a personalised timetable and bespoke tasks. The SENCo conducts extra checks to ensure that these pupils continue to make progress.

- The chair of governors is new to her role. However, she and other governors have a strong grasp of what is happening in school. They regularly check leaders' actions to assure themselves that all pupils receive an appropriate education in the current circumstances. Communication between leaders, the local board and trustees is effective. This has enabled leaders to draw on support from the trust where necessary.

- The trust provides effective support. The director of primary school improvement works with the school on a weekly basis. As a result, the trust improvement partner has an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. You work closely with other headteachers in the trust. You appreciate this strong, collaborative support. You have put careful plans in place to develop leaders at all levels. This will provide you and your senior leaders with more time to focus on school improvement.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. We spoke to you, other senior leaders, pupils, a representative from the trust and two governors, including the chair of the local governing body, to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

We considered information about the school's remote education offer on the school website. We looked at samples of recorded lessons and we heard pupils read. We also looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 11 free-text responses, and 25 staff questionnaires.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer of the Clevedon Learning multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Somerset. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Matt Middlemore
Her Majesty's Inspector