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Lynne Robbins
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Dear Mrs Robbins

Additional monitoring inspection of Park Junior School

Following my inspection with Tonwen Empson and Paul Williams, Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI), to your school on 25 and 26 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 initially carried out remotely but moved to an on-site visit due to significant concerns about safeguarding.

The inspection took place because the school has received two successive judgements of requires improvement at its previous section 5 inspections. The school was last inspected in October 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.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders and those responsible for governance should take further action to:

- carefully sequence the curriculum content across all subjects to ensure gaps in pupils' knowledge are closed.

Context

- The school is currently being led by the acting headteacher. She was appointed in November 2020 and was formerly the deputy headteacher. The new special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) and all senior leaders were previously teachers at the school. Three teachers have recently been appointed. Five new members have joined the governing body. The new chair of governors was appointed in July 2020.
- During the autumn term of 2020, a small number of pupils accessed their learning remotely for short periods of time. In addition, the closure of the Year 3 'bubble' meant that pupils in this year were educated at home for nine days.
- At the time of this inspection, 30% of pupils were learning on site. Approximately 25% of vulnerable pupils and 40% of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are in school. The majority of pupils with a high level of need attend school.

Main findings

- During our on-site visit, we looked at safeguarding, particularly safer recruitment practice. Leaders make the necessary safeguarding checks on all staff and governors. Record-keeping is accurate.
- Governors have a clear understanding of their roles. They are well trained. As a result, they are diligent in challenging and supporting senior leaders.
- You and your team check daily that pupils are doing their learning online. Teachers email and telephone pupils and their families regularly. If you are unable to contact a family, however, you check in with 'doorstep' visits.
- Leaders have ensured that all pupils have access to electronic devices and the internet. Pupils at home do the same appropriate learning activities as the children of keyworkers and vulnerable pupils who attend school. Pupils can complete learning activities online or in paper packs. Teachers share pre-recorded lessons with pupils and provide helpful feedback.
- Leaders have thought carefully about how they support remote education. You have adapted curriculum plans by changing the order of some content so that it is more easily accessible for pupils working from home. For example, in mathematics, pupils are currently exploring money and measurement. Pupils will study fractions when they return to school.

- This term, the English lead correctly identified that pupils need help to develop their reading and writing skills. Each week, the focus for writing comes from a high-quality book. This widens pupils' range of reading choices and vocabulary. Work continues to equip pupils with the phonic knowledge they need to become independent and confident readers. It is too early to see if these changes have helped to improve pupils' writing.
- Teachers are clear about the essential knowledge that pupils must remember in English and mathematics. However, leaders have not set out clearly what pupils must know and remember in other subjects. Therefore, it is difficult for teachers to identify what learning pupils have missed.
- Leaders have a detailed knowledge of how learning is being provided for pupils with SEND. Work is underway to help pupils with SEND get used to being back in school. The SENCo works closely with teachers to check whether pupils have forgotten any essential knowledge so that this can be considered in future plans.
- Leaders and those with responsibility for governance actively seek support from external partners. The acting headteacher is supported by a mentor from a local school. All leaders work closely with a local authority school improvement adviser to monitor the impact of leaders' actions.

Evidence

This inspection was initially conducted remotely but moved to an on-site visit due to concerns about safeguarding. We held meetings with the acting headteacher, governors, a representative of the local authority, senior leaders, pupils and staff to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown and concerns about safeguarding.

We also looked at pupils' work and checked safeguarding records. We looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 35 free-text responses, and 28 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 Gloucestershire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Marie Thomas
Her Majesty's Inspector