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Deborah Currans
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Dear Mrs Currans

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Tweedmouth Prior Park First School

Following my remote inspection with Alex Thorp, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), of your school on 2 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.

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. 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 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:

- develop curriculum plans so that content in all subjects is clear and well sequenced
- develop the remote learning offer to ensure all pupils have access to a full range of reading materials
- ensure that governors' monitoring is sharply focused on school improvement so that they can challenge leaders on the impact of their actions.

Context

- Leadership of the school has been stable. You have appointed one teacher since the last inspection.
- A very small number of pupils had to work from home for a period of time during the autumn term 2020.
- At the time of this inspection, approximately two thirds of pupils were being educated at home. All pupils with education, health and care (EHC) plans and just over half of vulnerable pupils were attending school on site.
- A small number of staff are absent from work because of COVID-19.
- Nursery remains open to all pupils, but you have timetabled children's access to ensure the nursery complies with your COVID-19 risk assessments.

Main findings

- You know your community well. You have captured the views of parents and carers and sought to provide remote learning for pupils in a way that suits their needs. As a result, remote learning is provided through paper-based packs and some online materials. Astute monitoring and a tailored approach to remote education has led to an increase in pupil participation. Almost all pupils now complete and return work each week.
- You have aligned the curriculum so that pupils are accessing the same content at home and in school. In subjects such as mathematics, teachers have reordered units of work and prioritised curriculum content they feel is most easily learned at home. For example, you have replaced work on fractions with shape.
- You have systems in place for pupils' work to be quarantined, checked and returned at the end of each week. Teachers provide regular feedback to pupils on their learning through written comments and weekly phone calls. You encourage contact from parents so that queries can be quickly addressed. At the end of each week, parental feedback sheets are used by

teachers to inform their planning. Teachers also use this feedback to provide support to those pupils working remotely.

- You have continued to prioritise reading. Phonics sessions are taught daily for pupils in the early stages of reading. Links to phonics videos are provided for children learning remotely. Pupils in school, who need help with their reading, continue to receive it. You invite pupils who are learning remotely into school to receive this extra help too.
- Prior to COVID-19 you had started to review the curriculum in subjects other than English and mathematics. These developments have been delayed by COVID-19 restrictions. In some subjects, such as history and geography, you have identified the key knowledge and concepts that pupils must understand and remember. Where curriculum plans are well sequenced you are able to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and provide the support required to help them catch up. This is not the case in all subjects.
- You continue to provide training to teachers on your chosen phonics programme. This has been a priority for some time and, as a result, you have developed a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics. During the period of national restrictions, older pupils have had their reading choices limited. You have well developed plans to introduce a new reading scheme to pupils in Year 3 and 4 when they return. However, pupils working from home do not have access to the same breadth and quality of texts as those working at school.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) continue to receive work and support that is matched to their needs. You monitor the work teachers send home to ensure it is appropriate. Plans that detail the support and targets for pupils with SEND continue to be reviewed. This ensures that teachers know the best way to support these pupils. You have made sure pupils with SEND continue to access specialist support if they need it, such as speech therapy.
- Governors monitor the work of leaders through regular visits to school. These visits have been carried out remotely during the period in which national restrictions have been in place. Information from visits is shared at governing body meetings. This gives governors a clear understanding of the challenges the school is facing. Governors' visits are not always fully focused on specific school improvement priorities and how governors can measure the impact of leaders' actions, however.
- You have drawn on local authority support to help you in reviewing the curriculum. Where this work has been completed, learning is more clearly sequenced. Leaders continue to work with a mathematics hub to develop their approach to the teaching of mathematics, although this work has been

delayed due to COVID-19. Leaders are also using the support of a national leader of education to develop subject leader roles.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. We spoke to you and your assistant headteachers. We met with two groups of pupils as well as 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 also looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including seven free-text responses. We received and considered the responses to eighteen 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 Northumberland local authority. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Pearce
Her Majesty's Inspector