

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



14 April 2021

Mr Paul Bowlas
Executive Headteacher
Holy Trinity C of E Infant School
Trinity Lane
Ripon
North Yorkshire
HG4 2AL

Dear Mr Bowlas

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Holy Trinity C of E Infant School

Following my remote inspection with Gill Wild, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), of your school on 23 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 April 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 all staff receive training to teach phonics with the quality and consistency expected by leaders.

Context

- There has been a significant change in staffing since the previous inspection. New members of staff have been appointed and some teachers have been redeployed from the junior school.
- At the start of the spring term 2021, just over half of pupils were educated remotely. Approximately half of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) were in school. Those with an education, health and care plan were educated remotely. Almost all the pupils that leaders class as vulnerable attended on site.
- Following the period of COVID-19 restrictions, all pupils have returned to school.

Main findings

- You and the whole school team have pulled together. Everyone in school wants pupils to continue to learn successfully. You want school life to be as 'normal as possible' for pupils. Staff have focused on continuing with the learning and care pupils need. Pupils and their parents and carers appreciate this. One parent said, 'Everyone in the school provided excellent home learning resources and continues to support the transition back into the classroom.'
- You and subject leaders in school have developed clear plans for what to teach in all subjects. Subject leaders have been careful to make sure pupils build up the specific knowledge needed in each subject. For example, in history pupils build up their understanding of the past through learning about toys from different periods. Leaders have linked the knowledge pupils are learning to the vocabulary they will need. They are continuing to develop the curriculum plans and support teachers with how to implement them.
- When many pupils were learning at home, teachers followed the intended curriculum in most subjects. Teachers provided live sessions and recorded videos and made regular phone calls to pupils. Pupils uploaded their work for teachers to see. Teachers checked pupils' work and gave them feedback on what they had done. Because of these efforts, nearly all pupils continued to complete work every day.
- During the period of COVID-19 restrictions, you had to change what was taught in some subjects. For example, not all of the design and technology curriculum was taught. This was because you realised that pupils may not

have what they needed at home to do it. You and subject leaders know what pupils have not learned. Teachers plan to teach what was missed in the summer term.

- Since all pupils have returned, you have been very clear that you do not want to 'over assume' what pupils know and do not know. You want them to continue to study all the subjects in your curriculum. You also want them to stay 'on track'. Teachers have assessed pupils in the basics of English and mathematics. Any pupils who need extra support receive it. As a result, teachers are increasingly successful at plugging any gaps in pupils' knowledge. You intend to check what pupils know in other subjects in the summer term.
- You have prioritised reading. You and all your staff team understand its importance. Teachers know which pupils need more support in their phonics. They use extra phonics sessions to make sure pupils learn the sounds that they need. Most pupils are taught using expert support from well-trained staff. Leaders recognise that some staff have not received the training that they need. As a result, not all phonics sessions are as effective as leaders want them to be.
- Teachers have made individual learning plans for some vulnerable pupils. These plans support pupils to access the curriculum. For pupils with SEND, the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) checks these plans. While these pupils were at home, the SENCo checked how often they were learning and to what standard. These plans have continued to be used now that all these pupils are back in school. This means most staff know how to support these pupils to be successful.
- Governors have continued to meet regularly during the pandemic. They have made virtual 'visits' to the school. These visits have focused on safeguarding and the curriculum. Governors ask challenging questions of leaders. They ensured that teachers used the school's planned curriculum while pupils were learning from home. They recognise the need to continue to focus on the curriculum now that all pupils have returned to school.
- You have carefully selected the support that you use. For example, your reading leader wanted to ensure that the early reading curriculum was clear and precise, so you brokered support from a local English expert. You also work in partnership with the local authority. This helped you ensure your remote learning offer was effective.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. We spoke to you and the deputy headteacher. We held meetings with four curriculum leaders, the reading leader and the SENCo. We also spoke to a group of pupils and a group of staff. We held

meetings with members of the governing body and representatives from both the local authority and the diocese to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

We also reviewed examples of remote lessons and looked at curriculum plans and other documentation provided by school leaders. We watched a short phonics session and listened to some pupils read. We looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 53 free-text responses, and 33 staff questionnaires.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Diocese of Leeds, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for North Yorkshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Matthew Knox
Her Majesty's Inspector