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James Stanford
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Stanford

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Stower Provost Community School

Following my remote inspection of your school on 16 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 March 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 teachers identify gaps in pupils' knowledge in all subjects and adapt the curriculum to ensure that essential knowledge is prioritised.

Context

- Since the section 5 inspection in March 2019, one governor has left the governing body. A new early years foundation stage teacher started in September 2020.
- At the start of the spring term, 50% of pupils were being educated in school. Approximately 85% of vulnerable pupils were attending on site. All pupils with education, health and care plans were attending school.
- At the time of this inspection, all pupils were attending on site.

Main findings

- You and your team thought carefully about how to help pupils return to school. You considered their well-being and learning needs when planning their return. For example, you have provided additional support for pupils who were anxious about coming back to school. Staff have adapted the curriculum so that pupils have time to develop listening skills and taking turns.
- Teachers are currently finding out what essential knowledge pupils can remember in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers are using this information to adapt the English and mathematics curriculum to meet pupils' needs. However, teachers have not yet checked for gaps in pupils' knowledge in other subjects.
- Since returning to school, some pupils are finding it difficult to concentrate on their learning. Teachers have made sensible changes to the structure of lessons. This helps pupils to focus better on their learning.
- Teachers regularly check pupils' mathematical knowledge to identify those who need additional support. Staff are working with these pupils to help them to recall important number facts.
- Teachers correctly match online books to pupils' phonic knowledge. Pupils who need extra help to improve their reading have daily catch-up sessions. This additional support is helping pupils to develop their early reading skills.
- The special educational needs coordinator has regular contact with pupils and their families. As a result, vulnerable pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, receive suitable support. For example, leaders have made sure that speech and language therapy has continued throughout the period of COVID-19 restrictions.

- Governors check on staff and pupils' well-being. Leaders regularly share their plans with the governing body. Therefore, governors have clear oversight of leaders' actions.
- Subject leaders regularly attend training provided by a local network of schools. This has helped subject leaders to understand their roles and responsibilities better. Support from an external adviser began in January 2021 but work has been limited due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. I spoke to you, your staff, the chair of governors and a representative of the local authority to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

I also looked at examples of planning and the school's COVID-19 catch-up funding plan. I looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including 20 free-text responses, and 11 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 Dorset. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Marie Thomas
Her Majesty's Inspector