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Fiona Optholt
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Dear Mrs Optholt

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Trafalgar Junior School

Following my remote inspection with Noeman Anwar, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), of your school on 18 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 September 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 the phonics programme is delivered consistently throughout the school to teach reading to those pupils who are unable to decode and blend sounds
- implement the new plans in all subjects and continue to develop subject leaders' expertise so that they can monitor their subjects across the school.

Context

- The headteacher left the school in July 2020. Governors appointed an acting headteacher for the federation and an acting headteacher of the junior school. Senior leaders who were already working at the schools took up these posts in September 2020. The headteacher of a local school is currently supporting senior leaders. These temporary appointments will remain in place until September 2021.
- Approximately 80% of pupils were educated remotely at the start of the spring term. Almost all vulnerable pupils were educated on site. 80% of pupils with education, health and care plans were educated in school.
- At the time of the inspection, all pupils were being educated on site.
- A small proportion of staff were absent due to COVID-19 at the time of the inspection. Leaders have made suitable arrangements, including using existing staff, to cover these absences. Some staff were also providing education remotely.

Main findings

- Leaders have made sure that pupils are being taught the full range of subjects. Teachers check what pupils have learned and remembered in lessons. Leaders are using this information to adapt their plans for the summer term. Leaders make sure that teachers continue to use some online learning systems. This is in case remote education is required in the future.
- After the previous inspection, leaders reviewed the curriculum and started to make changes. This work was delayed due to COVID-19. Leaders work with different organisations to help them develop their subject knowledge. You and your team have created new subject plans. Subject leaders work with teachers to check how these plans are being implemented. The plans to review physical education and design and technology are not as well established as other subjects. Leaders aim to get back on track by the end of July 2021.
- Leaders introduced a new phonics programme and some staff received training in how to use it. Teachers use it to support some pupils who struggle with reading. Teachers track pupils' progress and allocate books matched to

their reading ability. Teachers use a different phonics programme to support pupils in Years 5 and 6. As a result, the support teachers and teaching assistants provide is inconsistent. Leaders should prioritise training to ensure that staff use a consistent approach to teaching phonics.

- Leaders provide appropriate support for vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils' timetables include help in class and additional sessions. The timings for any extra sessions are planned so that pupils do not miss other subjects. Leaders check that what is provided is appropriate and make changes if needed. Therapists work with pupils with SEND. Leaders and therapists deliver training for staff, parents and carers. This is so that they know which approaches to use to help pupils.
- Leaders share their subject plans with governors. Governors challenge leaders to demonstrate that the plans are effective. Governors have created a schedule of school visits and meetings with subject leaders to check how the plans are implemented. As a result, governors are knowledgeable about the progress subject leaders are making. Some governor visits have been delayed because of COVID-19.
- Leaders work with the local authority to improve the school. Local authority partners worked with governors to create stability in senior leadership. This has enabled the work on improving subjects to happen. Subject leaders work with leaders in the local authority and subject experts to create plans. This is helping subject leaders to develop their expertise. For example, the school improvement partner's recommendations led to changes in the way reading is taught. Not all subject leaders have benefited from this support because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. We spoke to you, other senior leaders, staff, 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 carried out a 'visit' to a lesson. We looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 209 free-text responses, and 36 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 Richmond upon Thames. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Andrea Bedeau
Her Majesty's Inspector