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Leyton McHale  
Headteacher  
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South Yorkshire  
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Dear Mr McHale

### **Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Swallownest Primary School**

Following my remote inspection with Vic Wilkinson, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), of your school on 5 March, 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 at its previous section 5 inspections. 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 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:

- refine curriculum plans to show the key knowledge that pupils should know and remember at the end of each unit of work in each subject.

### **Context**

- Since the last inspection, three teachers have left the school and three have joined. One of these is an assistant headteacher. There have been some changes to the governing body, including a change of chair.
- Across the autumn term, half of your pupils had to learn from home on at least one occasion. Pupils in Year 4 were affected more than other year groups because of a 'bubble' closure.
- At the time of this inspection, three quarters of pupils were being educated at home, including half of the vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The remaining pupils were being educated on site.
- At the time of the inspection, the school was not dealing with significant staffing issues.

### **Main findings**

- Leaders have designed a curriculum that has a clear purpose and overall end goals. You are keen to make sure that pupils have lots of memorable experiences and develop important key skills. It is clear how many key concepts, such as community, are revisited and developed over time. The vocabulary that pupils need to learn in each unit of work has been identified. However, leaders have not identified the specific knowledge that pupils will learn in each subject at each stage. This means that pupils do not always know and remember what they need for the next stage of their learning.
- Leaders have designed and implemented a well-thought-out, consistent education offer in the current circumstances. Pupils are following the content from their normal curriculum, but the sequence of learning has changed. This is because leaders have chosen to cover content which they believe is best suited to learning remotely now, saving other content for later in the year.
- Pupils learning at home are asked to follow the same timetable and to complete the same tasks as those in school. Tasks are set in five live lessons each day. The timing of these is staggered so that siblings in different year groups can access them at different times. Lessons are also recorded to give families further flexibility. Leaders have provided some pupils with electronic devices and offered paper-based learning.

- Leaders have thought carefully about their reading offer and have made sure that all staff are well trained in its delivery. Pupils in the early stages of learning to read have daily phonics lessons and access to decodable books that match their phonics knowledge. More fluent readers have a daily reading lesson and access to the core texts for their year group. Leaders are keen to continue to promote a love of reading. For example, all pupils can listen to a daily story.
- Leaders have high aspirations for pupils with SEND. They make regular checks to ensure that pupils receive work that is well matched to their needs, whether they are learning in school or at home. Pupils have access to appropriate resources to support both their academic and social development.
- Leaders have plans to assess all pupils when school is fully open to establish new starting points in each subject. They intend to address misconceptions and any gaps in pupils' knowledge that may have occurred during the time away from normal schooling.
- Governors have a wealth of information about the impact of the work of school leaders. They understand the challenges leaders are facing and are keen to offer their support. Their links with subject leaders are helping them to feel assured that the current education offer meets the needs of the pupils.
- Leaders have received informal leadership support and challenge from the local authority through an associate headteacher. Subject leaders engage with local authority networks, which supports their work on curriculum planning.

## **Evidence**

This inspection was conducted remotely. We spoke to you, other senior leaders, 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 considered curriculum planning and samples of pupils' work. We looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 45 free-text responses, and 21 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 Rotherham. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Chris Cook  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**