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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Daisy Bailey
Headteacher
Manor Field Primary School
Junction Road
Burgess Hill
West Sussex
RH15 0PZ

Dear Miss Bailey

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Manor Field Primary School

Following my remote inspection with Louise Walker, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), of your school on 23 February 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 June 2018.

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:

- strengthen governors' monitoring of the quality of the curriculum, especially in foundation subjects
- gain a comprehensive understanding of pupils' strengths and weaknesses in reading and use this to ensure that the subsequent curriculum meets pupils' needs effectively.

Context

- Since the last monitoring inspection in February 2020, the early years leader has left the school and a new one has taken up post. Four teachers have left and three have joined. Two governors have left and been replaced.
- Two fifths of pupils had to be educated at home at different points in the autumn term. This included several groups of pupils in 'bubbles' in Reception Year and Years 1, 4, 5 and 6. The whole school closed for the final week of the autumn term due to a significant outbreak of COVID-19 among staff and pupils.
- A third of pupils were being educated on site at the time of this inspection. This included a third of the vulnerable pupils at the school and two thirds of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) who have education, health and care plans.

Main findings

- Leaders work hard to make sure that pupils keep learning as much as they can during the current circumstances. Leaders are rightly ambitious to ensure pupils will not miss out on learning any new key knowledge. They have identified carefully those pupils who are educated in school. Equally, they have put considerable thought into how best to teach pupils working at home. Leaders constantly seek to make improvements to how this happens. Governors keep an overview of the education the school provides, checking the effectiveness of leaders' actions to deliver it.
- Leaders have minimised disruptions to the existing curriculum. Whether learning on site or at home, pupils continue to study the full, usual range of subjects. Specialist teaching of subjects such as dance, music and modern foreign languages remains in place. Leaders have made some well-judged adjustments in some subjects, for example in physical education and personal, social, health and economic education.

- Developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding remains a priority. An emphasis on pupils' personal development and well-being is threaded through the curriculum.
- Pupils attending school on site, many of whom are vulnerable pupils or those with SEND, benefit in a range of ways. Pupils enjoy being taught in small groups because staff are able to give them very focused support. Pupils get one-to-one help from adults when they need it. Teachers set work that aims to meet individual pupils' needs. Pupils also receive additional specialist support when relevant, for example from speech and language therapists.
- Teachers aim to make learning at home as much like being in school as possible. Pupils have regular contact with teachers and work is structured well across each day and week. Strong partnerships with parents are a clear priority. Teachers check pupils' work, providing advice about how to improve. Teachers maintain high expectations of the quality of pupils' work and follow up any issues quickly.
- Leaders have made sure strong provision for reading is in place. Teachers follow the usual reading curriculum. Pupils working in school appreciate the extra help and teaching they receive. Leaders have adapted the reading curriculum carefully and thoughtfully so that pupils working at home can keep on track, providing additional resources for parents and pupils.
- Teachers know much about pupils' progress in reading. Leaders recognise this is not a complete picture, however. They know that having a full understanding of pupils' strengths and weaknesses is a priority so that future teaching meets pupils' needs effectively.
- Governors challenge leaders effectively about the right things. They monitor appropriate aspects of the school's work in a systematic way. This has been particularly important in order to support leaders during the past year.
- Governors are rightly focused on how well the school serves its pupils, in terms of keeping them safe, supporting their well-being and, crucially, the quality of their education. For example, governors check how well pupils are achieving in reading, writing and mathematics, holding leaders to account. However, governors' checks on the quality of the curriculum in other subjects are not yet as thorough.
- Leaders have been determined to keep improving the school despite the challenges of the past year, including some very significant ones last term. The local authority has monitored this progress regularly, recognising leaders' impact. A national leader of education provides useful support, for example in developing subject leaders' effectiveness. Leaders have valued participating in a research-based project aimed at improving disadvantaged pupils' achievement, made possible by funding from the local authority.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. We spoke to you, other senior leaders, a number of subject leaders, one governor, a representative of the local authority and the national leader of education who is supporting the school, to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown. We also spoke to two groups of pupils.

We considered a number of documents provided by the school, including minutes of governing body meetings. We looked at pupils' work and examples of how lessons are taught. We observed pupils reading to an adult. We looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 52 free-text responses, and 32 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 West Sussex. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Matthew Haynes
Her Majesty's Inspector