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Helen Atkins
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Dear Mrs Atkins

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Sherwood Junior School

Following my remote inspection with Stephanie Innes-Taylor, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), of your school on 30 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 was judged to require improvement at its previous section 5 inspection. The school's most recent section 5 inspection took place in January 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:

- complete the work to rewrite the curriculum so that it sets out precisely what pupils should know, and when, in all subjects
- monitor the impact of the curriculum on pupils' learning and progress.

Context

- There have been considerable changes in staffing and governance since the last inspection. A number of teaching and support staff have left the school. The head of school was appointed in January 2021. Other senior leaders and the entire governing body are new to the school.
- Approximately eight out of 10 pupils were educated at home in the spring term before the school reopened to all pupils. The majority of vulnerable pupils and all pupils with an education, health and care plan were educated on site during that period.
- At the time of this inspection, the vast majority of pupils were attending on site.

Main findings

- Leaders and governors are taking the necessary actions to provide education in the current circumstances. Building on their experiences over the past year, leaders have a well-established system for providing remote education.
- Since the last inspection, leaders have rewritten the school's curriculum. Initially, they wrote plans setting out the skills they wished pupils to acquire in each subject. More recently, leaders recognised the need to include more details about what pupils should know, and in what order. Leaders aim to complete this work in all subjects by September 2021.
- Staff are in the process of checking what pupils have learned and remembered from remote and on-site education during the spring term. They have identified that some pupils may lack confidence and have gaps in their learning. Leaders intend to use this information to plan the summer term curriculum.
- Leaders have introduced a new phonics scheme since the last inspection. Trained staff provide phonics teaching for pupils of any age who are in the early stages of learning to read. Daily phonics sessions were available as part of the remote education offer. Pupils read from books that are well matched to their phonics knowledge.
- Leaders and staff have prioritised the needs of vulnerable pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff ensured that

they had regular contact with parents and pupils who were learning at home. Some pupils with SEND have benefited from a flexible transition back into school.

- After a period of significant upheaval over several years, governance is in a more settled position. There are plans to fill the current governor vacancies over the coming months. Governors have worked with leaders to ensure that all pupils receive education during the current circumstances. They continue to assure themselves that pupils are safe and that vulnerable pupils and those with SEND are well cared for.
- The local authority has provided training and support for the school since the last inspection. Staff have received guidance from the local behaviour partnership to develop expertise in managing any challenging behaviours pupils may demonstrate. The school is part of an informal collaboration with another local junior school. This brings benefits of shared staff training and discussion.

Evidence

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

We also observed pupils reading to members of staff and reviewed curriculum plans. We looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including eight free-text responses, and 18 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 Nottinghamshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Christine Watkins
Her Majesty's Inspector