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22 March 2021

Sarah Williams  
Headteacher  
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Lincolnshire  
DN16 3JF

Dear Mrs Williams

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

Following my remote inspection with Jenny Thomas, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), of your school on 2 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.

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 three successive judgements of requires improvement. The school's most recent section 5 inspection took place in November 2018.

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:

- develop face-to-face options to assess key stage 1 pupils' phonics knowledge remotely.

### **Context**

- A new school business manager was appointed in September 2020.
- The local authority recommended a trained accountant, who has useful financial knowledge and skills, to fill one of two governor vacancies. The other recently appointed governor is a staff representative.
- Almost all pupils attended school throughout the autumn term 2020. One group of 22 Year 5 pupils learned at home for 10 days in November.
- Almost half of all pupils are attending school now. All pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) were offered a school place, and three quarters of these pupils are attending. All pupils who have an education, health and care (EHC) plan and all pupils who speak English as an additional language are also learning in school.
- At the time of this inspection, two members of staff were absent. One of these staff absences is linked to COVID-19.

### **Main findings**

- This school welcomes all pupils warmly. Leaders and governors are determined that as many pupils as possible should be learning in school currently. They extended the government's definition of 'vulnerable pupils' to include many more pupils. All teachers are in school every day so that pupils can be spread out into smaller groups to be taught safely.
- Minutes of governing body meetings show that governors challenge leaders well. For example, governors frequently check how many pupils are engaging with remote learning. They encourage leaders to draw even more pupils into school if families are struggling. The governors' decision to form a 'soft federation' with the local secondary school is continuing to add value. The secondary school headteacher is an associate governor. Between them, governors have the necessary knowledge and skills to be an effective governing body.
- The whole staff team works together to ensure that live or pre-recorded lessons are uploaded for pupils who are learning at home. Staff morale is high. Teachers and other staff telephone pupils and parents at least once a week to check that pupils who are being educated remotely are happy and learning. Parents really appreciate this. One parent said, 'They are always just a message away should you need them. Absolutely fantastic!'

- Leaders are part-way through implementing their new curriculum. Middle leaders continue to refine plans for each subject. Senior and middle leaders regularly check the progress pupils are making in different subjects. Leaders have changed some content to make it easier for pupils who are learning at home. For example, teachers have thought creatively and adapted some lessons into 'kitchen-sink science' investigations. These kitchen-sink experiments include materials that are readily available in family homes.
- Teachers adapt lessons for the few pupils with SEND whose parents prefer to keep them at home. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) checks that each lesson has been adapted well enough. The SENCo, working alongside pupils, parents and a range of professionals, completed all reviews of pupils' EHC plans when these pupils were in school throughout the summer term 2020.
- Every week, the early years leader visits the few children in the Reception Year who are learning at home. Teachers deliver resource packs along with their planning for the following week. As a result, parents are given time to prepare to support their children's learning. Teachers pre-record bedtime stories. The early years leader hears some children read 'on their doorstep' weekly. This helps early years teachers to assess children's progress in early reading and phonics.
- In key stage 1, pupils who are learning at home complete and upload written work to show their understanding of the sounds they have learned. Some parents upload videos of their children reading. Some pupils read to their teacher over the telephone. However, the lack of any face-to-face meetings, either virtually or through socially distanced appointments, means that teachers cannot assess key stage 1 pupils' phonics knowledge well enough.
- The local authority established peer review groups where leaders work with fellow headteachers to challenge each other. This structure helps to provide quality assurance of leaders' work and prompt fresh reflections. This has helped school leaders to improve the school rapidly. The local authority is providing effective support.

## **Evidence**

This inspection was conducted remotely. We spoke to you, other senior leaders, pupils, staff, eight 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 reviewed several pre-recorded lessons in different year groups and examples of pupils' work. We observed pupils reading to their teacher and evaluated documentation. This documentation included records of visits by the local authority and minutes of meetings of the governing body. We looked at responses to Ofsted's

online questionnaire, Parent View, including 25 free-text responses, and 43 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 North Lincolnshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Tracey Ralph  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**