

4 March 2021

Rachel Davidson
Headteacher
Holy Family Catholic Primary School
Upper Essex Street
Liverpool
Merseyside
L8 6QB

Dear Mrs Davidson

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Holy Family Catholic Primary School

Following my remote inspection with Andrew Cook, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), of your school on 3 and 4 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 special measures.

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 was judged to require special measures at its previous section 5 inspection. The school's most recent section 5 inspection took place in April 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:

- ensure that leaders and teachers have a greater understanding of how well pupils are learning across different subjects so that they can adapt the curriculum more readily to meet pupils' needs.

Context

- Since the previous inspection, one teacher has left, and two new teachers have joined the school. One parent governor has stepped down. Two new governors have joined the governing body. One of these governors has taken on the role of chair of the governing body.
- In the autumn term, approximately half of all pupils received a period of remote education. This affected pupils in Year 6 and Year 4 more than pupils in other year groups.
- At the time of this inspection, approximately one fifth of pupils are being taught in school. Approximately six in every 10 vulnerable pupils were in school. For every ten pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), approximately three were attending.

Main findings

- You and the school's leaders have ensured that pupils have access to education whether they are learning in school or at home. The current curriculum includes a broad range of subjects for all year groups. Staff focus their efforts on making regular checks on pupils' well-being and their learning.
- Following the previous inspection, subject leaders worked to strengthen curriculum plans. Governors checked that these plans matched the expectations set out in the national curriculum. Since March 2020, the delivery of these improved curriculum plans has been interrupted repeatedly by the COVID-19 restrictions.
- During the autumn term 2020, teachers checked on pupils' learning. This helped teachers to identify what pupils knew and what they could remember in most subjects from the previous academic year. Leaders identified most of the content that pupils had missed or forgotten, and adapted their curriculum plans appropriately. That said, you and teachers have not checked how well pupils are currently learning in all curriculum subjects. This means that teachers are not able to adapt what they are teaching in order to meet pupils' needs.
- You have ensured that each family has access to at least one electronic device. This is helping all pupils, including vulnerable pupils and those with SEND, to access learning from home. Staff check carefully on the learning of vulnerable pupils who are not in school. Leaders place a strong focus on

looking after the mental health of these pupils. Those vulnerable pupils who are not in school access the same curriculum as their peers. Often, teachers tailor work for those pupils working remotely in order to meet pupils' individual needs.

- Teachers deliver effective reading and phonics sessions daily. Children in the early years and pupils in key stage 1 benefit from these sessions. Whether working at home or in school, pupils across the school have access to a range of books. Teachers ensure that the books pupils read match the sounds that pupils are learning. Older pupils continue to receive support with phonics to help further develop their reading skills. Subject leaders in English check on the delivery of the reading and phonics curriculums across the school. This ensures that there is a consistent approach to the teaching of reading and phonics during the current circumstances.
- The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) has close oversight for the learning of pupils with SEND. This enables the SENCo to provide effective support to teachers so that they are able to help pupils access learning. Alongside other staff, the SENCo provides appropriate guidance for parents and carers to help them to support their children at home. Leaders know pupils well. Individual plans set out the needs of pupils with SEND clearly. There is a strong emphasis on supporting pupils' individual needs, including those working from home. With the exception of additional intensive support from external professionals, such as speech and language therapists, leaders are meeting the needs of these pupils well.
- Governors are increasingly effective at holding leaders to account. For example, they use their knowledge to challenge leaders about pupils' learning in English and mathematics. That said, the governing body are not as well informed about how well pupils learn across the wider curriculum. Governors continue to challenge you and other leaders about the education provided for those pupils working from home. This challenge includes a sharp focus on the additional support for vulnerable pupils and those pupils with SEND.
- The school has benefited from useful support from both the local authority and the Archdiocese of Liverpool. Support from the local authority has been effective in improving the quality of curriculum planning and delivery. The local authority adviser is also helping governors to develop their expertise and ability to ask the right questions. This support has brought about improvements in the level of challenge that governors provide. The Archdiocese has continued to provide support and challenge to the school. This support has been effective in improving the education provided for vulnerable pupils and those pupils with SEND.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. We held meetings with you, other senior leaders and teachers. We spoke with pupils, heard some pupils read to trusted adults and reviewed samples of pupils' work. We met with parents and members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. We also met with a representative of the local authority and a representative of the Archdiocese of Liverpool. These meetings were to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

We reviewed minutes from governing body meetings and examples of the school's curriculum plans. We also considered the three free-text responses to Ofsted's survey for parents, and the 23 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Archdiocese of Liverpool, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Liverpool. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

John Donald
Her Majesty's Inspector