

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



9 March 2021

Mrs Helen Simmerson
Headteacher
Emmaus Catholic and Church of England Primary School
Southend Road
Sheffield
South Yorkshire
S2 5TF

Dear Mrs Simmerson

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Emmaus Catholic and Church of England Primary School

Following my remote inspection with Tracey Ralph, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), of your school on 10 and 11 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.

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. The school's most recent section 5 inspection took place in September 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.

Context

- Since the last inspection, two newly qualified teachers have joined the school and the governing body has appointed two new governors.
- Approximately two thirds of pupils have had to learn from home for a period of time, because of COVID-19, during the autumn term 2020. Pupils in Year 3 have had repeated periods of self-isolation.
- During this inspection, the school was open to vulnerable pupils and the children of key workers. Almost one quarter of pupils were attending school and three quarters were learning from home. A high proportion of vulnerable pupils are attending school. Less than half of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are attending on site.
- At the time of this inspection, a small number of staff were absent due to COVID-19.

Main findings

- Leaders have established a strong common purpose to provide education in the current circumstances. You have a committed and caring team of leaders and staff morale is high. This has helped you to face challenges with success, acting decisively to provide education to all pupils. You continue to be evaluative and adapt your offer.
- Your team have swiftly developed a remote education package. Your leadership team have thoughtfully adapted the curriculum to make it accessible to all. This includes pupils who are working from home. Leaders have provided laptops and access to Wi-Fi, offering paper-based resources when parents prefer this. Leaders are determined that no pupil should be disadvantaged by a lack of access to learning. However, leaders should ensure that all pupils join in with the live lessons that are offered.
- You have made sensible decisions about the order in which the curriculum is taught. Leaders are successfully implementing their curriculum plans. For example, pupils are developing secure knowledge and skills in history.
- Leaders have prioritised places in school for vulnerable pupils, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and the children of key workers. Leaders have good relationships with families and understand the community well. You have used this knowledge to adapt your offer flexibly to make sure you are meeting pupils' needs.
- Leaders have ensured that phonics continues to be taught consistently. For example, leaders continue to offer daily phonics sessions to pupils in Nursery and Reception Year, Years 1 and 2 as well as for some pupils in Years 3 and 4. These sessions are richly resourced. Teachers give books to pupils that match the sounds they know. They have supported parents in helping their children learn to read.

- The team that supports pupils with SEND is proactive. They make every effort to support pupils appropriately through carefully laid out plans. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) has recently reviewed the progress of all pupils with SEND, successfully increasing parents' engagement in this process. All parents of pupils with SEND, who completed Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire, agree that the school gives their children the support they need.
- Governors ensure that leaders are taking effective action to ensure that all pupils are receiving an education. They are mindful of leaders' workload yet have established an unequivocal stance in professionally challenging the school, especially during the current circumstances. Leaders at all levels report directly to governors, providing evidence to support or back up their evaluations. Governors regularly meet with staff and pupils to check the information provided to them.
- Leaders have developed strong, well-chosen partnerships which offer the school and its community a rich and diverse range of support, challenge and experience. The representative from Learn Sheffield is keenly aware of the challenges that the school has faced and continues to work with the school to add value. Similarly, the multi-academy trust has a very accurate view of the school. They challenge and support the school appropriately.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. We held meetings with the headteacher, other senior leaders, pupils, staff, the chair and vice chair of the governing body, the CEO of the Hallam Schools' Partnership Academy Trust and a school improvement partner from Learn Sheffield to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

We also listened to pupils reading to adults in school and looked at pupils' work via the digital system for remote education. We looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 37 free-text responses, and 43 staff questionnaires.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer or equivalent of the Hallam Schools' Partnership Academy Trust, the director of education for the Diocese of Hallam, the director of education for the Diocese of Sheffield, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Sheffield. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Marcus Newby
Her Majesty's Inspector