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Miss Karen Wood
Headteacher
Micklefield Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School
Great North Road
Micklefield
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Dear Miss Wood

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Micklefield Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Following my remote inspection of your school on 26 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. The school's most recent section 5 inspection took place in July 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.

Leaders and those responsible for governance should take further action to:

- ensure that the school's new phonic programme is fully embedded and delivered consistently well to all pupils
- ensure that pupils who struggle with reading, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), receive the support they need to help them catch up quickly.

Context

- Recently, there have been changes to governance. A new chair of the governing body took up the post in January 2021.
- Across the autumn term 2020, no pupils were required to access education remotely.
- At the time of the inspection, a quarter of pupils were attending school, with the remaining pupils accessing education remotely. Approximately three quarters of vulnerable pupils and two thirds of those with SEND were attending school on site.

Main findings

- During this period of national restrictions, you and your senior leadership team have ensured that education has continued for all pupils. Governors have raised funds for devices and access to such equipment has been provided for pupils when needed. Recently, you have included start of the day sessions where teachers explain the work that pupils are expected to do. As a result, pupils' engagement is improving.
- Prior to schools partially closing in March 2020, you were in the process of reviewing and developing your curriculum. This work was interrupted and delayed due to COVID-19 restrictions. Leaders have well sequenced curriculum plans in place with carefully selected content in the core subjects. However, this is not the case in other subjects. This term, a renewed focus on the curriculum has begun.
- You have made staff and pupils' well-being a priority. Staff make daily contact with all pupils in a video check-in session. When teachers do not see a pupil, staff will make a home visit to ensure the pupil is safe. Teachers hold weekly virtual 'Choc and Chat' sessions for pupils to have social time with their friends. This means that staff and pupils are maintaining strong relationships despite the pandemic.
- The leader responsible for reading is working closely with a local English hub. Together, they are evaluating the school's reading curriculum. All staff have

been trained to deliver the school's phonics programme, but are in the early stages of implementing it.

- Pupils working from home and those attending school on site have access to online reading books and phonics videos. However, some pupils who find reading difficult, including those with SEND, do not have an opportunity to read aloud to an adult. This means that some pupils are falling further behind with their reading. Leaders know that there is more to do to improve reading and have plans in place to address this.
- Most vulnerable pupils and those with SEND are attending school. Pupils with SEND have access to the same curriculum as their peers. A few pupils have a tailored curriculum to match their needs. Teachers have changed some of the content in line with pupils' support plans. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCo) provides support and advice to parents. Parents who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire indicated that they welcome this support.
- Governors are beginning to hold leaders to account. Minutes from the most recent governing body meeting demonstrate this. Governors have continued to hold discussions with leaders about the curriculum, including the school's remote education offer. Governors listen to staff views and act to improve their well-being. Staff have appreciated this support. Those who responded to Ofsted's questionnaire indicated that they are proud to work at the school.
- The local authority has provided substantial support and challenge for school leaders and governors. The school improvement advisor has worked with school leaders to develop the school's reading, writing and mathematics curriculums. Leaders have made some improvements in these areas. There is still further work to do to improve the curriculum plans in the foundation subjects.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. I spoke to you, other senior leaders, subject leaders, staff, representatives of those responsible for governance, a representative from the diocese and a representative of the local authority to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

I looked at governors' minutes. I reviewed the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 16 free-text responses, and 14 staff questionnaires.

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

Yours sincerely

Jean Watt
Her Majesty's Inspector