

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



21 April 2021

Russell Tew
Headteacher
Leen Mills Primary School
Leen Mills Lane
Vaughan Estate
Hucknall
Nottingham
Nottinghamshire
NG15 8BZ

Dear Mr Tew

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Leen Mills Primary School

Following my remote inspection with Roary Pownall, 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 has received two successive judgements of requires improvement. The school's most recent section 5 inspection took place in June 2019.

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:

- develop the effectiveness of subject leaders so they are able to check that pupils are learning the subject-specific vocabulary they need, and make sure that pupils are remembering sufficient knowledge in all year groups.

Context

- Since the previous inspection three new teachers have been appointed. Two are temporary appointments, covering for teachers who are currently on leave.
- The governing body has appointed a new chair of governors and two further governors.
- During the early spring term before the school reopened to all pupils, approximately one third of pupils were educated on site. Almost all vulnerable pupils and a little under one half of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) were taught in school.
- Currently, all pupils have returned to school and are being taught on site.

Main findings

- Leaders have made sure that pupils carried on learning during lockdown. Pupils in school and at home followed the same curriculum. A small number of changes were made to the usual curriculum in science and design technology. This was because not all pupils had the resources that they needed at home to complete the work. When pupils did not join in with online lessons, leaders checked the reason for this. They made sure that any problems were sorted out.
- Prior to the pandemic, leaders had reviewed the school's curriculum. They have set out what they want pupils to know and remember in each subject, starting from the early years. Leaders have ensured that this work has continued during the past year. Leaders know that this work is not complete. Checks on what pupils can remember or the important words that pupils need to know are not taking place in all subjects.
- During the partial school closure, pupils uploaded their work to the school's online learning platform. Teachers checked regularly what pupils understood. They made sure that pupils got extra help if they needed it so that they did not fall behind. Pupils told inspectors that their teachers would always help them if they found the online work difficult to understand. However, a few pupils have not understood everything that was taught during this time. Leaders have further plans to ensure that pupils who have fallen behind during lockdown catch up.

- Daily phonics lessons continued during lockdown. Teachers assessed the progress that pupils made in phonics. If a pupil did not remember the sounds that had been taught, they were identified quickly. Staff provided one-to-one sessions or intervention groups for these pupils. During lockdown, pupils had access to online books. Teachers continued to read every day to their classes. Pupils feel that story time is a special time in school.
- Additional support is provided for pupils with SEND. The special educational needs coordinator checks that they get the help that they need. This ensures that the work provided for pupils with SEND helps them to build on what they already know. Support for pupils with emotional difficulties has also continued during lockdown. Key staff provided individual online meetings, to talk to pupils about how they are feeling. Parents praised the help that the staff offer. Every parent who responded to the Ofsted online questionnaire said that the school gives pupils with SEND the support they need to succeed.
- Governing body meetings have continued through lockdown to check the work of the school. Governors question leaders to assure themselves that pupils are safe and have continued to be educated during this past year. They understand how the school's curriculum has been developed. Governors take a strong interest in staff workload and well-being. A governor has been given responsibility to oversee this aspect of the school's work.
- The local authority has provided the school with a range of support and guidance. This has helped the school to improve early years provision and develop the role of subject leaders.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. We spoke to you and the deputy headteacher, five curriculum leaders, a small group of pupils, the leader responsible for pupils with SEND, two nurture leaders, the chair of the governing body and two further governors, and a representative of the local authority to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

We also listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 read. We looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including 81 free-text responses, and 27 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

Caroline Poole
Ofsted Inspector