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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
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Lesley Murdoch
Headteacher
Oliver Goldsmith Primary School
83 Peckham Road
London
SE5 8UH

Dear Ms Murdoch

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Oliver Goldsmith Primary School

Following my remote inspection with Bryony Freeman, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), of your school on 27 and 28 January, 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 at its previous section 5 inspections. The school's most recent section 5 inspection took place in September 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 lower-attaining readers benefit from phonics sessions which are pitched at the right level for them, and that adults routinely support these pupils in applying their phonic knowledge in all reading activities
- further develop curriculum planning in history and geography so that content in each subject is clearly sequenced to help build pupils' knowledge.

Context

- There have been significant changes to the leadership team since the time of the previous inspection. You became the substantive headteacher in January 2021. Two deputy headteachers have been appointed. A new chair of the governing body has also been appointed and you have recruited new members to the governing body.
- During the autumn term 2020, just over two thirds of pupils had to work from home during periods of isolation. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 3 had no disruption due to COVID-19, but pupils in Year 1 had two periods of remote learning during this time.
- The school is open to vulnerable pupils and the children of key workers. Half of the vulnerable pupils and a small number of pupils with special educational needs and/ disabilities (SEND) are being educated at school. Approximately 90% of all pupils are learning remotely.
- At the time of this inspection, five members of staff were absent due to COVID-19. Leaders have deployed staff to ensure that pupils' learning has not been interrupted because of this.

Main findings

- Leaders and governors are taking the necessary actions to provide education in the current circumstances. Teachers ensure that pupils benefit from live and recorded lessons. Pupils receive online tasks and activities. Paper learning packs are also provided for children in the early years and for other pupils who require them.
- Teachers make sure that all pupils have access to the planned learning, whether they are on site or at home. Staff greet pupils warmly when they join live online lessons. They establish that pupils are well and happy before the lessons begin. Pupils, who are on site, have access to additional activities, such as learning 'circus skills'. Pupils participate enthusiastically in these sessions.
- At the time of the previous inspection, the school's curriculum was under development. In some subjects, the curriculum was at the early stages of

implementation. Leaders have supported staff in implementing plans for reading, writing, mathematics and science. Leaders are now focused on strengthening plans for other subjects.

- Leaders have supported staff to adapt the curriculum to meet current challenges. The teaching of phonics, reading and mathematics is given a high priority. Plans for teaching history and geography place an appropriate emphasis on developing vocabulary. However, these plans do not provide enough support for teachers to sequence the subject knowledge.
- Teachers have adjusted the way in which they deliver subjects that have a practical element. This applies to subjects such as science, music, design technology and art. They signpost pupils to online materials which show some of the practical work. Teachers plan to revisit this work when all pupils return to school.
- Reading and phonics are given the highest priority within your remote education offer. This applies across all phases of the school, including in the early years. Staff plan a range of reading activities to support reading fluency and comprehension. Teachers select books designed to match to pupils' developing phonic knowledge. The books also support pupils' understanding and vocabulary development. This includes vulnerable pupils and those with SEND. Occasionally, books chosen in group sessions for lower-ability readers do not provide sufficient challenge. These pupils do not have enough opportunities to apply their phonic knowledge.
- Leaders are aware that some phonics sessions are not pitched at the right level for the lowest prior attaining readers. Leaders plan to review how they can deploy support staff to target sessions for these pupils. During group reading sessions, staff do not consistently show pupils how to apply their phonics skills when reading.
- The curriculum for pupils with SEND has been carefully adapted to meet the needs of pupils on site and at home. Individualised plans for each pupil also include support for parents and carers. Parents told inspectors that these plans were a great support to them. Pupils with sensory needs have appropriate resource packs. Therapy sessions and online intervention sessions continue to take place.
- Governors are very well informed about the education pupils are receiving currently. They meet remotely and more regularly than they did before the pandemic. They make sure that they support leaders in the decisions they make about the curriculum. The chair of the governing body is a regular presence on site, which leaders and staff appreciate. Governors have ensured that therapy sessions for pupils continued throughout the lockdown period. They have also offered these sessions to staff to support their well-being.

- The school works in partnership with The Mayflower Federation. Their involvement was facilitated by the local authority. Leaders across the federation work collaboratively on curriculum development. Leaders told us that the support and challenge they receive and give across the federation has been invaluable.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. We held meetings with the headteacher and other senior leaders, teachers, parents, governors and a representative of the local authority. These meetings were carried out to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

We also sampled parts of live lessons and recorded lessons. We also scrutinised teaching and learning documentation which leaders provided.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Southwark. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Ruth Dollner
Her Majesty's Inspector