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Alan Inglis
Head of School
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Dear Mr Inglis

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Turves Green Boys' School

Following my remote inspection with Ian Tustian, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), of your school on 27 and 28 January 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 June 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

- The temporary leadership arrangements, in place since March 2020, have been extended until the end of March 2021. This has brought stability to the senior leadership team. A new assistant headteacher joined the school in January 2021.
- The heads of English and mathematics left the school in August 2020. These positions have not been filled. Other school leaders are supporting these departments on a temporary basis.
- Across the autumn term 2020, around one third of pupils had to be educated remotely for a period of time. One Year 7 class experienced two periods of self-isolation.
- At the time of this inspection, around 90% of pupils were being educated at home. Approximately 50% of pupils who are vulnerable and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are attending on site.
- At the time of this inspection, no staff were absent due to COVID-19.

Main findings

- You and your leadership team are taking appropriate action to make sure that pupils follow a broad and balanced curriculum while schools are only open to some pupils due to COVID-19 restrictions. Subject leaders are adapting their curriculum plans. This is to address gaps in pupils' knowledge and to put in place the building blocks pupils need for later work. Leaders' checks on the quality of curriculum plans and their delivery are at an early stage of development.
- Teachers' approaches to assessing pupils' work and giving feedback are developing. As a result, many teachers are better able to plan lessons to meet pupils' needs. However, this is not yet consistently in place across the school. More needs to be done to ensure that lessons meet the needs of pupils with SEND.
- You have recently implemented a comprehensive plan for delivering remote education. This includes five hours of live teaching per day and is based on a pupil's normal timetable. You have made it a priority to ensure that all pupils can access these lessons. At the time of the inspection, a handful of pupils did not have access to suitable information and communication technology equipment. However, you were taking action to address this as a matter of urgency. All pupils did have access to paper-based resources. Levels of pupil participation have increased considerably since the new approach began.
- Leaders and staff monitor the engagement of vulnerable pupils and those with SEND closely. You are inviting more pupils to attend school where you

feel this would be beneficial to them. Pupils on site experience the same teaching, via a computer, as pupils working from home. Teaching assistants provide these pupils with any extra support if needed.

- Improvements in identifying and supporting pupils with SEND continue. Skilled staff are in place to support a range of specific needs. Unfortunately, COVID-19 has disrupted the programmes designed to improve pupils' reading skills. Leaders recognise the need to address this as a priority.
- You prioritised staff training during the autumn term 2020 for safeguarding and developing consistency in lesson planning. More recently, you have focused on developing teachers' skills in using the new online learning platform. Staff spoken to report that this has increased their levels of confidence in delivering remote learning.
- There have been improvements in pupils' behaviour, and expectations are higher than in the past. Pupils and staff spoken to agree on this. For example, staff and Year 11 pupils commented on the improved focus and engagement of Year 11 pupils in working towards their final assessments. You and your leadership team recognise that while behaviour has improved, it is still not good enough. You respond to behaviour issues as they arise and adapt systems and approaches as necessary. This includes taking individual pupil's needs into consideration.
- Pupils' welfare is now at the heart of the school. Staff are in regular contact with pupils and their families. Pastoral staff provide support to help ensure that pupils are 'well, fed and able to access their learning'. Responses to your own survey of parents show that most parents now feel the school is a safe and happy environment.
- Members of the interim executive board (IEB) have a clear view of the improvements that have happened over time and the challenges that the school continues to face. They are rigorous in carrying out their role and provide effective challenge to leaders. This helps to ensure that all pupils receive education in the current circumstances.
- The school has benefited from regular input from an expert in school improvement. This work, along with support and challenge from a range of other sources, including the local authority, has been well focused. It has had a positive impact in helping school leaders to address the identified areas of weakness.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. We spoke to the head of school, senior and middle leaders, teachers, pupils, representatives of the IEB, a representative of the

local authority and the school's executive leader to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

We also reviewed some documentation including reports following external reviews of the school, curriculum plans, examples of materials used in live lessons and samples of pupils' work.

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

Yours sincerely

Catherine Crooks
Her Majesty's Inspector