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Anna Rooney  
Principal  
De Warenne Academy  
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South Yorkshire  
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Dear Mrs Rooney

### **Additional, remote monitoring inspection of De Warenne Academy**

Following my remote inspection with James Duncan, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), of your school on 10 and 11 February, 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 three successive judgements of requires improvement. The school's most recent section 5 inspection took place in May 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.**

## Context

- Since the previous inspection in May 2018, your senior leadership team of vice principals and assistant principals has completely changed. You have also recently appointed new senior leaders to take responsibility for literacy, relationships and sex education, e-learning and alternative provision. Since the previous inspection, the sixth form has closed.
- At some point during the autumn term 2020, approximately 50% of pupils had to be educated remotely.
- At the time of this inspection, approximately 5% of your pupils were being educated on site. Around 90% of your pupils who have education, health and care plans are attending on site. A very high proportion of your vulnerable pupils are attending on site, although the times when some of them attend varies across the week. Where this is the case, in the very large majority of instances, this is managed in partnership with appropriate external agencies such as the local authority's children's services.

## Main findings

- Leaders and those responsible for governance have put in place a remote learning curriculum which consists of regular 'live' lessons and lesson resources for independent study, which pupils access online. You have thought very carefully about how best to deliver your remote learning curriculum. Teachers are expected to follow your, and the trust's, expectations for remote learning. Senior and subject leaders monitor the quality of what is being taught, and how.
- To a very high degree, the remote learning curriculum is based on the curriculum which was in place at the start of the pandemic. Five-year plans in each subject were already in place. Leaders have had to make some adaptations to these plans in the current circumstances, such as moving science experiments to later in the year, or adapting aspects of technology practical work. Other than such amendments caused by COVID-19, pupils follow sequences of lessons where the content of what they learn is the same, and in the same order, as it was pre-pandemic.
- Leaders are taking effective action to provide education for vulnerable pupils and the children of key workers in school by ensuring that they access the 'live' lessons and other lesson resources. Pupils in school are supported in their work by learning support assistants. Leaders are continuing to support their weakest readers with a phonics-based scheme.
- Pupils in Year 11 are following courses in the same qualifications which they started at the beginning of Year 10. Leaders have put extra one-to-one support in place for Year 11 pupils in the evenings and at weekends to help them to catch up on any lost learning caused by the pandemic.

- Leaders' plans to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are founded on ensuring that pupils receive the same quality of support as they did pre-pandemic. For example, learning support assistants work with pupils with SEND in breakout rooms within the school's digital learning environment. Leaders have already identified a detailed review of their SEND remote learning provision as a next step.
- Those responsible for governance are supporting and holding leaders to account for the decisions which leaders are making. This is particularly the case for the remote learning curriculum, where governors have a clear understanding of what curriculum is being provided. As such, governors are taking effective actions to ensure that all pupils receive an education during the current circumstances.
- School leaders are receiving strong support and challenge from the multi-academy trust to which the school belongs. For example, the trust has supported leaders in making sure that appropriate safeguarding processes are in place for remote learning, and in supporting subject leaders in making necessary adaptations to the remote learning curriculum. Staff who responded to the staff survey feel very positive about the school's leadership.

## **Evidence**

This inspection was conducted remotely. We spoke to you, other senior leaders, the delegate of the multi-academy trust's chief executive officer, pupils, and representatives of those responsible for governance, to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

We also reviewed examples of the school's remote learning provision together with senior leaders. We discussed the school's anti-bullying policy and practice. We looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including 28 free-text responses, and 46 staff questionnaires.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer of the Delta Academies Trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Doncaster. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Steve Shaw  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**