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23 March 2021

Ryan Metters  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mr Metters

### **Additional, monitoring inspection of Chellaston Academy**

Following my inspection with Rachel Tordoff, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), of your school on 2 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 have serious weaknesses.

This inspection was undertaken on the school site. This was because Ofsted had concerns about the school's safeguarding arrangements. Following changes to government guidance and the imposition of COVID-19 (coronavirus) lockdown restrictions, the range of evidence available to inspectors was narrower than would normally be the case. 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 have serious weaknesses at its previous section 5 inspection. 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.**

**Safeguarding is effective.**

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

- ensure that the curriculum is ambitious for all pupils, particularly pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)
- improve the reading resources that are available to support pupils' love of reading.

**Context**

- There have been significant changes to the leadership of the school since the previous inspection. The headteacher joined the school in September 2020. A new deputy headteacher and three assistant headteachers have also been appointed. A new chair of the governing body is in place, as well as four new governors.
- The school is due to be re-brokered to a different multi-academy trust.
- Across the autumn term 2020, most pupils had at least one period of self-isolation due to COVID-19 and were educated remotely.
- At the time of the inspection, a small number of pupils, including vulnerable pupils and pupils with education, health and care (EHC) plans, were attending school on site.

**Main findings**

- Since the previous inspection, there has been a positive shift in the culture of safeguarding within the school. Leaders make sure that safeguarding is the priority of all staff. Safeguarding arrangements are now secure.
- The leader responsible for safeguarding has acted swiftly to improve safeguarding arrangements in school. The safeguarding team has been strengthened significantly. There are more leaders with appropriate safeguarding training. They provide staff with effective safeguarding training that is responsive to the risks in the local area. Staff know how to identify when a pupil is at risk and take the right actions to keep pupils safe. Systems and procedures related to safeguarding are much more robust than previously.

- Leaders' determined actions have ensured that pupils can learn in the current circumstances. Pupils' study their usual curriculum through a mixture of live lessons and work they complete on their own. They benefit from a range of wider curriculum experiences, including the '25 Chellaston Challenges' and a virtual sports day. A school resource bus tours the community each week to distribute materials and books to pupils, so that they can continue learning. Typical of their appreciation, one pupil told us, 'Teachers have really understood that things are more difficult and have tried to adapt things – it's blown me away'.
- Leaders are creating a school community in which every pupil feels like they belong and can flourish. Leaders are ambitious for the pupils and want them to be successful. The range of subjects that students can opt for in the sixth form has increased. Leaders make sure that all students can choose courses that are appropriate to their interests and needs. Curriculum leaders have reviewed their curriculum plans. These plans emphasise the important subject knowledge that pupils need to know and when.
- Pupils who currently attend school on site study the same curriculum as those learning from home. Pupils in school receive extra support from teachers and learning assistants. This help includes support to improve these pupils' early reading skills. Leaders make sure that all pupils get the pastoral care they need to help them cope with the current situation.
- Leaders prepare pupils in Years 11 and 13 well for the next stage of their education, employment or training. Adults who used to study at the school talk to pupils about their career pathways since they left. These sessions motivate pupils to study and be ambitious for their futures.
- Early readers are identified when they enter the school in Year 7. Staff provide them with effective support so that they become more confident readers. Leaders' ambition is for Chellaston Academy to be 'a reading school'. A barrier to this is the school library. Currently, this is a gloomy space that does little to encourage pupils' love of reading.
- In some subjects, curriculum planning does not address the learning needs of pupils with SEND well enough. An experienced and skilled special educational needs coordinator has been appointed recently. Leaders know what needs to improve so that the curriculum is appropriate for these pupils. Leaders' actions are already having a positive impact on these pupils' experiences.
- The quality of governance has continued to improve since the previous monitoring inspection. The chair of governors is experienced, as is the governor that oversees the school's safeguarding arrangements. Governors are much clearer about their roles and responsibilities. They help leaders focus closely on the school's key values of 'Integrity, Care, Excellence' for all pupils.

- The trust supports and challenges leaders effectively. Trust officers have provided appropriate advice and guidance so that the school can get better more quickly. Leaders say that additional help from the local authority has been 'invaluable', particularly in relation to pupils' safeguarding and welfare.

## **Evidence**

This inspection was conducted on the school site. We spoke to you, senior and curriculum leaders, a group of teaching staff and a group of Year 13 pupils. We met with the interim chief executive officer of the trust, the chair of the trust board, the chair of governors and a representative of the local authority to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead and reviewed the arrangements in place to safeguard pupils' safety and welfare.

We looked at 146 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 70 free-text responses, and 108 staff questionnaires.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees and the interim chief executive officer of the PEAK multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Derby. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jayne Ashman  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**