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24 March 2021

Stuart Shelton  
Executive Headteacher  
Four Dwellings Primary Academy  
Quinton Road West  
Quinton  
Birmingham  
B32 1PJ

Dear Mr Shelton

**Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Four Dwellings Primary Academy**

Following my remote inspection with Mark Sims, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), of your school on Tuesday 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.

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 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.**

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

- planning in all subjects is as well sequenced as it is in English, mathematics and science
- staff are well trained to meet the needs of pupils with English as an additional language.

### **Context**

- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher has left the school. Following a period of interim leadership, you were appointed as executive headteacher in September 2020. There have been other staffing changes, including the appointment of four new teaching staff.
- During the autumn term 2020, just over one quarter of pupils received remote education due to bubble closures. Pupils in Years 1, 2 and 5 were affected by this more than other year groups.
- At the time of this inspection, approximately one fifth of pupils were being educated in school. Just over one third of pupils identified as being vulnerable and all pupils with education, health and care plans (EHCPs) were attending school.
- At the time of this inspection, one staff member was absent from work due to COVID-19.

### **Main findings**

- You and your staff are working hard to make sure pupils continue to study a broad and balanced curriculum, both at home and in school. Your efforts are proving successful. A structured timetable is in place for all year groups and staff check pupils' attendance or participation daily. The uptake of pupils accessing the work set is high.
- With the support of the trust, all pupils have been provided with digital devices and internet access to ensure that they can complete work set. Teachers set age-appropriate work in a range of subjects. A mix of live or recorded lessons and online resources are provided for pupils. Teachers provide regular feedback on work completed.
- Before the pandemic, you and your leadership team had designed and implemented well-sequenced plans in English, mathematics and science. You are now focussed on developing other subjects but acknowledge that there is more work to be done in subjects such as computing, modern foreign languages and music. Together with support from the trust, you have provided training for middle leaders to equip them with the skills needed to

lead and monitor their subjects. As the executive headteacher of both the primary and secondary school, you have prudently utilised staff expertise from the secondary school to help design the primary curriculum, to provide continuity and progression and also improve transition from Year 6 to Year 7.

- Reading leaders demonstrate a real passion for developing reading across the school. Teachers in the early years and key stage 1 have ensured that pupils continue to have two phonic lessons every day. Older pupils are encouraged to read daily and from a wide range of genres. All classroom reading areas have been revamped to entice pupils in. Incentives, including a book vending machine, reading rewards and celebration of World Book Day, help excite and motivate pupils to read.
- Leaders reported that there has been increased contact with vulnerable pupils during the lockdown period. All pupils have been allocated a key worker as a point of contact. Pupils working at home continue to receive the same help as those in school. Support staff join online lessons to make sure pupils are coping well and the safeguarding leader quickly follows up any pupils who are not attending lessons or completing the work set.
- About one quarter of pupils speak English as an additional language. Inspectors found that there has been less focus and attention on meeting the needs of these pupils. Staff have had limited training in this area. This means that online resources and support do not take sufficient account of pupils' learning needs.
- You have taken effective steps to ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) continue to receive education at this time. You have been successful in ensuring that all pupils with an EHCP are in school at this time. Modifications have been made so that the usual support programmes have continued for pupils working at home and in school. The leader keeps a close eye on pupils' well-being and progress.
- Governors are well informed and highly experienced. In their regular discussions and termly visits with you, they have focused on appropriate priorities at this time. This includes provision for vulnerable and SEND pupils, safeguarding and pupils' well-being, together with making sure that pupils have access to learning in the current circumstances. Governors work with subject leaders to monitor curriculum implementation and support their professional development. This helps them hold middle leaders fully to account.
- Trustees set high expectations for you and your staff. They have been instrumental in improving the leadership of the school. As a result of their support, the school is in a better place and the curriculum is now much stronger. They have confidence in you and your team. Consequently, trust support is being steadily reduced to give leaders greater autonomy.

## **Evidence**

This inspection was conducted remotely. We spoke to you, the previous executive headteacher, two deputy headteachers, curriculum leaders and pupils. We also held discussions with the national primary director from the multi-academy trust and the chair of the governor body to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

We also scrutinised minutes of governing body meetings and viewed tasks and resources provided for pupils' online. We looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 15 free-text responses, and 28 staff questionnaires.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer of Academies Enterprise Trust (AET), the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Birmingham. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Heather Simpson  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**