

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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David Priestley
Executive Headteacher
Greenfield Community College
Greenfield Way
Newton Aycliffe
County Durham
DL5 7LF

Dear Mr Priestley

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Greenfield Community College

Following my remote inspection with Ruth Dollner, 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 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. The school's most recent section 5 inspection took place in September 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:

- consolidate work on the curriculum and monitor the impact of this across all subjects
- ensure that the planned work to develop extra support for reading meets the specific needs of pupils.

Context

- Since the previous inspection, a new chair of governors, one new deputy headteacher and five new subject leaders have been appointed.
- During the autumn term 2020, most pupils experienced periods of remote education because of COVID-19. This happened on two separate occasions for Year 7 pupils.
- At the time of this inspection, the majority of pupils were being educated at home. About three quarters of all vulnerable pupils were attending on site. Around half of the pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan were in school.

Main findings

- In the current circumstances, pupils follow their usual timetables through live lessons, and their uptake of this provision is tracked. Leaders follow up with those pupils who are not attending as much as they should. Teachers have received training on how to use the school's online learning platform, for example, in the use of 'break-out' rooms to help support the needs of individual pupils.
- The school has made use of external support to develop planning in different subjects. This has included making audits of foundation subject plans in relation to national curriculum requirements. The local authority has supported this work. Teachers continue to plan collaboratively. They have found this helpful. Leaders believe they are delivering the full depth and breadth needed in each subject. However, work to develop the curriculum has slowed down due to the pandemic. More time is needed for leaders to implement and evaluate the impact of changes they have made to the organisation of different subjects.
- During the pandemic, some changes have been made to the existing curriculum because of restrictions brought about by remote learning. For example, Year 8 textiles lessons have deferred practical assignments until pupils return to school. Leaders updated curriculum plans at the start of this academic year to account for missed learning. They have identified key knowledge that pupils may not have learned. This will be prioritised when pupils return.

- All pupils complete the same work, either at school or remotely. Those on site, including vulnerable pupils, are provided with additional help from support staff. If pupils are not accessing lessons remotely, leaders invite them to come into school. Teachers are using a range of strategies to provide pupils with timely feedback.
- Leaders shared plans to improve the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) during the inspection. As part of these plans, leaders allocated time for staff training and development. Some of this training has been able to continue in the current circumstances. Leaders have ensured that pupils with SEND receive individual support linked to their needs. Teachers make use of teaching assistants in the delivery of remote lessons.
- Work to develop pupils' reading is at an early stage. Leaders are currently selecting the pupils who will benefit from additional support. Accelerating this work is a priority for school leaders. Pupils in Year 11 are continuing with their normal curriculum, as timetabled, including receiving careers information, advice and guidance.
- The school is receiving support from the local authority. This includes half termly visits and close monitoring. Leaders are working with a partner school, which has helped to inform their strategic planning. The local authority adviser is positive about the school's engagement with this guidance.
- Governors and the local authority have supported leaders in streamlining the advice and guidance that they have received. This has helped the school to focus on one set of priorities. Governors are confident speaking about the current provision. They are clear about how they hold leaders to account and are aware of the school's priorities, both current and in the longer term.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. We spoke to you, other senior leaders, curriculum leaders, teachers, a representative of those responsible for governance and a representative of the local authority to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

We also looked at examples of the work uploaded for pupils. We looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 113 free-text responses, and 68 staff questionnaires.

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

Yours sincerely

Sophie Welch
Her Majesty's Inspector