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Luci Clapton
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Dear Mrs Clapton

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Stimpson Avenue Academy

Following my remote inspection with Caroline Poole, Seconded Inspector, of your school on 16 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.

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 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:

- monitor the implementation of the curriculum in all subjects, to check the impact it is having on what pupils know and remember.

Context

- Since the last inspection, the senior leadership team has changed. The executive headteacher took over leadership of the school in 2019 and, as of September 2020, the two assistant headteachers were promoted to deputy headteacher and head of school. The leader for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) joined in the autumn term. The trust formed the governing body.
- During the recent national lockdown, approximately two thirds of pupils were learning at home. All the school's vulnerable pupils and most of the school's pupils with an education, health and care plan.
- Currently, almost all pupils are in school. The pupils who are continuing to learn at home are shielding.

Main findings

- Leaders have made sure that pupils have had access to education during the pandemic. Throughout the recent lockdown, teachers provided online lessons for pupils. These were closely matched to the school's usual curriculum. Leaders gave pupils who could not get online laptops or access to the internet.
- Before the start of the pandemic, school staff redesigned the curriculum. Subject leaders from schools across the trust worked together. They planned out what they wanted pupils to know, and how knowledge would build over time. Leaders started to implement this curriculum before the pandemic hit. Due to the pandemic, leaders have done what they can to monitor the curriculum. However, they are aware that they will need to measure the impact once all pupils return to school.
- Teachers are adapting the school's curriculum due to the restrictions of the pandemic. When pupils were learning at home, teachers changed some curriculum content. For example, Year 1 pupils were learning about their local area. Teachers combined physical education (PE) and geography, asking families to get on their bikes or walk to find local features. So that they can cover everything they need to, teachers have moved some content to later in the year. For example, pupils will learn how to use apparatus in gymnastics during the summer term.
- Teachers use different methods to spot what pupils can and cannot remember. These methods include quizzes, recapping previous learning, and

giving pupils organisers which show the key knowledge in a subject. In the next few weeks, teachers will check further what pupils have learned in English and mathematics. Teachers will cover any gaps or missed content over the summer term.

- The school's programme for teaching reading carried on during the lockdown. Teachers continued with daily phonics lessons. Pupils at home and in school learned sounds appropriate to their stage of learning. They have learned the same number of sounds as they would have had they all been in school.
- For pupils learning at home, teachers set tasks linked to the content covered by pupils in school. There are plans for these pupils to join in with lessons via video.
- The school's leader for pupils with SEND, the special educational needs coordinator, is providing training and support for staff. This includes helping staff to identify pupils who might have SEND and how to adapt the curriculum for pupils. Leaders are continuing with the strategies which worked well during lockdown now that all pupils have returned to school. For example, teachers ask these pupils questions during lessons, or by make sure that adults are close by to give support.
- Governors know what the school needs to do next to continue to improve. They say they have adopted a 'no excuses' culture. They are checking the work of leaders such as asking how effective the new curriculum is or how catch up funding is benefiting pupils.
- The trust has provided significant support for curriculum development. Subject leaders speak highly of the support they have received. This includes the subject networks set up across the trust. When designing the curriculum, the trust sought advice and guidance from subject specialist organisations.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. We spoke to you, the executive headteacher, deputy headteacher, subject leaders, the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the lead academy improvement partner, academy improvement partner and the head of standards and performance, pupils, staff and representatives of those responsible for governance to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

We also listened to pupils read and scrutinised curriculum documents available on the school's website. We looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 14 free-text responses, and 32 staff questionnaires.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer or equivalent of the East Midlands Multi-Academy Trust, the regional schools

commissioner and the director of children's services for Northamptonshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Helen Williams
Her Majesty's Inspector