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Stephanie Dyce
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Dear Mrs Dyce

Additional, monitoring inspection of Hall Park Academy

Following my inspection with Peter Stonier, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), of your school on 18 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.

Inspectors visited the school site due to significant concerns about safeguarding raised at the previous inspection. 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 December 2019.

Having considered all the evidence and taking into account the impact of COVID-19 (coronavirus) 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 key stage 3 modern foreign languages (MFL) curriculum is well planned and ambitious for all pupils.

Context

- A new headteacher was appointed in January 2021. Since the previous inspection, two assistant headteachers, a special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) and a curriculum leader for music have joined the school. Three new governors have joined the local academy board this academic year.
- In January 2020, an assistant headteacher took over the responsibility for safeguarding. Since the previous inspection, a new trust leader for safeguarding has been appointed.
- Most pupils were educated at home when the school was closed to most pupils at the start of the spring term 2021. During that time, about two thirds of the school's vulnerable pupils and half of those pupils with an education, health and care plan attended school on site.
- At the time of this inspection, almost all pupils were being educated on site.

Main findings

- School and trust leaders have addressed the weaknesses in safeguarding arrangements identified at the previous inspection. The trust has strengthened the leadership of safeguarding at all levels. School leaders work closely with the trust's new leader for safeguarding. Together, they ensure that the school's practices and procedures are secure. Those responsible for governance have the information they need to check that leaders are keeping pupils safe.
- Leaders complete detailed checks before pupils begin to study at an alternative provider. They call providers every day to make sure that pupils are attending. They use reports from providers effectively to ensure that pupils are studying the most suitable courses. During regular visits, leaders check that pupils feel safe at their placements and that they have someone they can talk to if they have a concern. Every pupil who attends alternative provision remains on the school's roll.
- Leaders responsible for safeguarding are knowledgeable and well trained. They provide safeguarding updates so that staff and governors understand their respective responsibilities. Staff know how to report any concerns about pupils' safety. Pupils' safeguarding records are thorough. These records show

that leaders work closely with external agencies to get extra help for pupils who need it. Leaders complete detailed assessments for pupils who are at risk of harm. Leaders update these risk assessments regularly to make sure that they are still appropriate.

- Leaders have continued to review the key stage 3 curriculum since the previous inspection. In most subjects, the curriculum is well planned and ambitious. In English, leaders have reviewed their choice of texts to make sure that pupils experience a wide range of literature. Leaders make sure that pupils learn important subject knowledge in a logical order. For instance, in geography, Year 7 pupils use their previous knowledge to compare two countries in the Middle East. However, in MFL, the key stage 3 curriculum is not ambitious for all pupils. Leaders are addressing this concern.
- Leaders have reordered their curriculum plans, particularly in subjects with a practical element. Teachers deliver these practical aspects to make sure that pupils do not miss essential subject knowledge. Teachers check pupils' recall of previous learning frequently. In geography, pupils complete 'pink-slip' quizzes at the start of most lessons to make sure that their knowledge is secure. Leaders know that some pupils did not engage with their learning as well as others during the most recent national lockdown. They have plans in place to support these pupils so that they do not fall further behind.
- Well-trained staff provide pupils who struggle to read with effective support. These pupils improve their reading skills and expand their vocabulary. Teachers check pupils' reading skills in Years 7 and 8 regularly to make sure that pupils can access the curriculum. Across the school, staff encourage pupils' love of reading. All pupils spend some lesson time each week reading a book of their choice. Leaders suggest texts pupils may enjoy through the school's newsletter.
- Leaders have plans to ensure that pupils in Years 11 and 13 complete their courses. Year 11 pupils benefit from individual mentoring as they prepare for their next steps.
- The new SENCo understands the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. She ensures that staff are able to identify pupils who need extra help. Most pupils with SEND study the same curriculum as their peers. Teachers consider carefully how to meet these pupils' needs when planning learning. A small number of parents of pupils with SEND, who made their views known, do not feel that their children are supported well enough.
- Leaders ensure that pupils who are learning at home study the same curriculum as their peers in school. Pupils stay on track with their studies by accessing live lessons.

- Trust leaders made sure that school leaders were well prepared for the most recent national lockdown. They provided senior leaders with support to track pupils' attendance and engagement during this period. Trust subject leaders helped curriculum leaders revise their curriculum plans in preparation for pupils returning to school on site.
- Those responsible for governance hold leaders to account well. Since the previous inspection, governors have developed their skills. Links with different subject leaders keep them well informed about any changes to the school's curriculum, including as a result of COVID-19. Trust leaders provide senior leaders with effective support and challenge, so that the school can continue to improve.

Evidence

We spoke to you, the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, including the leader responsible for safeguarding, and the SENCo. We met with curriculum leaders for English and geography, and a group of staff. We held a discussion with a group of pupils and observed three pupils reading to a member of staff. We spoke with a representative of the local authority and one of the school's alternative providers.

We held meetings with the chief executive officer of the Redhill Academy Trust and three members of the local academy board, including the chair of the board, who is also a trustee, to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils in the current circumstances.

We considered information about the curriculum, and documentation relating to safeguarding and leaders' use of alternative provision. We looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 35 free-text responses, and 66 staff questionnaires.

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

Yours sincerely

Rachel Tordoff
Her Majesty's Inspector