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Holly Rigby
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Rigby

Serious weaknesses monitoring inspection of The Telford Park School

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection of your school that took place on 15 February 2023 on behalf of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills. The monitoring inspection was carried out under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005 and was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses following the graded (section 5) inspection that took place in May 2022.

During the inspection, I discussed with you and other senior leaders, the chair of the trust, the chair of the education advisory board, the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent graded inspection. We discussed the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. I also spoke with pupils, visited lessons and scrutinised a range of documents. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

The Telford Park School remains inadequate and has serious weaknesses. Leaders have made insufficient progress to improve the school.

The progress made towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation

Since the previous inspection, a new deputy headteacher has been appointed with responsibility for behaviour and school ethos. Other roles have been redistributed to increase senior leadership capacity. The local governing body has been suspended. In its place, the trust has put an Educational Advisory Board (EAB). The EAB visits the school every half term to check on the progress leaders are making against its action plan. The

school has also received additional support from the trust since being placed in a category of concern.

Since September 2022, the school has experienced significant challenges with the arrival of additional pupils on roll at the school with complex social, emotional, and mental health needs.

On this inspection, I focused primarily on the work of school and trust leaders to improve safeguarding. I also looked at the actions that have been taken to improve behaviour and attitudes.

Leaders' work to improve safeguarding is proving to be successful. A new safeguarding team has been established, whose members meet regularly to discuss and manage incidents when they arise. Leaders have a strong understanding of the local area. They recognise local risks that exist within Telford and are vigilant to emerging issues. Leaders work closely with external agencies and access support where needed. For example, you have invited the local police into school to talk to pupils about knife crime and gang culture.

You ensure that all staff receive regular safeguarding training. This includes updates to government guidance and other key topics such as extremism. There are clear systems in place for staff to report a concern about a child and these are well understood. Leaders act quickly to ensure that pupils who need help get this in a timely way. Leaders keep accurate and up-to-date logs of safeguarding incidents, all of which is well managed.

Leaders carefully track and monitor incidents of harmful sexual behaviour, racism and homophobia. You recognise there has been an increase in the number of incidents that have been reported so far this year. However, several pupils say this is because they feel more confident in coming forward to report issues because leaders will take steps to address these issues. All pupils have been issued with a 'trusted adult card' on which they have named a member of staff they can speak to if they have a concern. You have also recently introduced a 'safe squad' of pupils who help to support others around school. As a result, more pupils say they feel safe in school.

At the start of this academic year, you introduced a new behaviour policy. Leaders spoke with staff, parents and pupils to ensure that all stakeholders were able to contribute to the policy's construction. All staff have received training on this new policy and pupils have been made aware of changes to the consequence system. Although there has been a decline in suspensions and records of higher-level incidents, behaviour remains poor. Several pupils stated that lessons were regularly interrupted by persistent low-level disruption. They also stated that a significant minority of pupils continue to misbehave at breaktimes and lunchtimes. In addition to this, too many pupils are internally truanting from lessons. You recognise that there is more work to do to ensure that staff consistently implement the school's behaviour policy and tackle incidents of low-level disruption effectively.

You and your senior team are monitoring and tracking pupils' attendance effectively. An education welfare officer is now working full-time at the school to help support and improve attendance. Leaders ensure that pupils with low attendance are quickly identified and that necessary interventions are put in place. Leaders have also put in place rewards to help incentivise pupils and encourage better attendance. Leaders' actions are beginning to have a positive impact.

Leaders have looked to strengthen the implementation of the curriculum by ensuring that teachers use assessment strategies effectively in lessons. Leaders have developed a model which sees staff working closely together in small groups in order to reflect on their own teaching practice. Teachers are using assessment strategies, such as mini whiteboards, with greater consistency. However, there remains too much variability in how the curriculum is taught. Some staff do not have high enough expectations for the work pupils produce or how they should behave in lessons. In addition, some teachers do not systematically check pupils' understanding in order to ensure that they are secure in what they know before moving on to the next part of the learning.

The EAB visits the school regularly to check on the progress leaders are making. Members of the EAB look to check the work of leaders and hold them to account for their progress against key action plan objectives. Information from these meetings is passed to the trust board, whose members further scrutinise this information with the chief executive officer. Despite progress being made in some areas, the trust has not ensured that sufficient progress has been made around pupils' behaviour and attitudes. This remains an area of concern.

You have welcomed the support you have received from external partners. This has included two visits from the local authority to check safeguarding arrangements. Leaders have also visited several local schools to look at behaviour management. The school is part of the Department for Education's behaviour hub. Leaders have recently attended a virtual induction day as part of this and visited the lead school in the hub.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, and the chief executive officer of the Community Academies multi-academy trust, the Department for Education's regional director and the director of children's services for Telford & Wrekin. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Mark Howes
His Majesty's Inspector