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28 March 2024

Lisa McVeigh  
Principal  
Samworth Church Academy  
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Nottinghamshire  
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Dear Ms McVeigh

### **Requires improvement monitoring inspection of Samworth Church Academy**

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 27 March 2024, 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 took place because the school has received two successive judgements of requires improvement at its previous graded (section 5) inspections.

The purpose of a monitoring inspection is not to grade the school's overall effectiveness, but to identify and report on the school's progress. It is to highlight to the school and parents any improvements that school leaders have made since the school's previous graded inspection.

During the inspection, I discussed with you and other senior leaders, the chief executive officer (CEO) of the trust and governors 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 visited lessons, held meetings with staff and pupils, observed pupils at break and lunchtime and looked at relevant documentation. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

**Leaders have made progress to improve the school, but more work is necessary for the school to become good.**

## **Main findings**

Since the last inspection, you have appointed a new member of staff to lead on attendance. You have also changed the structure of the day so that pupils have more time in their tutor groups, which are now organised in year groups. This means that staff now have more time to discuss important issues with pupils, such as attendance. The school has also recently introduced a new behaviour policy. Leaders have made some changes to how the curriculum is delivered.

Leaders have introduced a new lesson structure, regular 'quizzes' to check pupils' understanding, and 'buffer lessons' so that there is time to address any gaps in learning. Staff have had training in how to use recall activities effectively. This work has supported teachers in checking pupils' understanding more effectively. Most staff use 'do it now' activities well to check pupils' understanding of prior learning. Pupils now do regular quizzes on key knowledge. Teachers use the information from these quizzes to address gaps in pupils' learning and misconceptions. More teachers are now ensuring that learning matches pupils' needs and builds on pupils' prior learning. You have also introduced reading interventions for those pupils who need extra support. This is helping these pupils gain the reading skills and knowledge they need to access the curriculum.

You have recently introduced a new behaviour policy that has raised expectations of pupils' conduct. Staff and pupils are clear about these expectations. The staff members spoken to during the monitoring inspection were positive about the changes. They said the system is clear and staff are more consistent in its application. Staff recognise that behaviour has improved. In lessons visited during the inspection, pupils had positive attitudes to learning, and no low-level disruption was observed. During unstructured times, most pupils behave sensibly. Pupils said they feel safe in school and that bullying is dealt with well. Your analysis of behaviour records shows that there are still some pupils who disrupt the learning of others. Suspensions have increased. Leaders have a clear oversight of any pupils with more challenging behaviour. These pupils get support. This is helping to reduce the number of pupils with repeat suspensions.

The attendance of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is still too low. Leaders analyse attendance data in detail and then coordinate actions to support pupils to attend more regularly. Clear processes and systems are in place so that staff are aware of any barriers to regular attendance that pupils may have. Pupils know the importance of regular attendance. However, sustainable improvements are not yet evident. You know that more work needs to be done in this area and are deploying more resources to address this.

The school has implemented a clear improvement plan to address the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. You, other leaders, and those responsible for governance regularly monitor and evaluate this plan. The trust has provided support in the areas that need improvement. For example, the academy improvement director and the CEO have provided support so that middle leaders have the necessary skills to carry out effective quality assurance. You have worked with another

secondary school in the trust to review systems for behaviour and attendance. Those responsible for governance ensure that you remain focused on improving the school in the most important areas.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, and the CEO of the Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham Multi-Academy Trust, the director of education for the Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham, the Department for Education's regional director and the director of children's services for Nottinghamshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Paul Halcro  
**His Majesty's Inspector**