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Nicky Baddeley
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Dear Mrs Baddeley

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of All Saints National Academy

Following my remote inspection with Jonathan Leonard, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), of your school on 23 February 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 special measures.

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 was judged to require special measures at its previous section 5 inspection. The school's most recent section 5 inspection took place in May 2018.

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 ensure that:

- subject leaders check that work set for remote learning is well sequenced
- all pupils are challenged to reach their capability.

Context

- Since the previous inspection, an assistant headteacher has been appointed as the interim vice principal to increase senior leadership capacity.
- During the autumn term 2020, 86% of pupils received remote education at some point. Pupils in Years 2, 4, 5 and 6 were affected by this more than others.
- At the time of this inspection, 16% of pupils were being educated in school. Approximately 66% of vulnerable pupils and 50% of pupils with education, health and care plans were attending school.
- At the time of this inspection, three staff were absent from work due to COVID-19.

Main findings

- You and your staff are working hard to successfully provide pupils with education at this time. You continually monitor and review the provision in place in order to improve what and how pupils learn. A key focus is pupils' and staff's well-being. You ensure that pupils and staff have some time away from laptop screens, and you have systems in place to keep in regular contact with all families.
- Historically, computer equipment for staff and pupils was limited. You have invested in and secured sufficient digital equipment to provide pupils with access to online learning at home. Work packs are provided for pupils who prefer to use paper. A new online platform has also been introduced. You note that this has increased the number of pupils accessing and completing their work remotely. Staff now upload work daily for pupils, as opposed to weekly, as you found this to be more effective. However, subject leaders do not check that work set remotely is well sequenced or builds on pupils' prior learning.
- Currently, whether at home or in school, pupils are studying all their usual subjects. In many cases, teachers follow existing curriculum plans. Staff continue to prioritise English and mathematics as many pupils are still working below age-related expectations. On occasion, teachers' expectations are too low and the work set is not sufficiently challenging.

- Teachers use a creative approach to deliver other subjects. They have made adaptations in subjects such as art and science, to make activities more manageable at home. All classes follow a theme day on Fridays. Pupils have greater choice in what tasks they complete. Tasks are designed to be practical to reduce pupils' screen time. Music and computing tuition continue to be provided remotely by specialist teachers.
- The school has a structured phonics programme and daily routines for teaching reading. Pupils are expected to read regularly. Books are well matched to pupils' abilities and reading skills. Teachers read stories to their classes online to encourage a love of reading. The introduction of e-books has been successful in inspiring and encouraging older pupils to read at home. Pupils can choose their favourite genre and complete quizzes to check their comprehension and ability levels.
- The designated safeguarding leader keeps in close contact with vulnerable pupils, their families, and external services, and she monitors pupils' well-being effectively. She encourages pupils to attend school to receive additional adult help and, as a result, the majority do. Parents are also provided with helpful guidance to enable them to support their children better at home.
- You make sure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are receiving appropriate education, either in school or at home. Additional support provided is tailored to pupils' needs. This includes adult help in school or calls to those learning at home. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) also provides live teaching sessions for some individual pupils and their parents. She ensures that the work set is appropriate to pupils' learning needs.
- The members of the local academy committee (LAC), who are responsible for governance, are ambitious for the school and are focusing on the right priorities to maintain school improvement. They rightly identify that COVID-19 has been a source of delay to some of their plans but feel strongly that leaders are doing all they can in the current circumstances. The LAC continues to meet regularly and has made an effective contribution to decisions about remote education. Members have made appropriate, recent checks on attendance, SEND and safeguarding to ensure that these areas are improving.
- You continue to work closely with the trust. Regular progress board meetings and school reviews enable members to monitor school improvement. External support is also received from the local authority to support curriculum development. Staff are involved in programmes for early years language, information technology, raising achievement for disadvantaged youngsters and reading with the local English hub. You continue to buy in support for attendance from an external officer. All these services are helping to steer the school in the right direction.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. We spoke to you, the multi-academy trust chief executive officer, curriculum leaders, staff, pupils and representatives of those responsible for governance to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

We also scrutinised minutes of the local academy committee meetings and viewed tasks and resources provided for pupils' online. We looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including nine free-text responses, and 38 staff questionnaires.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer of St Chads multi-academy trust, the director of education for the Diocese of Lichfield, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Walsall. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Heather Simpson
Her Majesty's Inspector