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Mr Simon Wood
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Dear Mr Wood

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Copperfield Academy

Following my remote inspection with Alice Roberts, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), of your school on 27 and 28 January 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 January 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:

- ensure leaders' plans for mathematics are successfully implemented so that all staff are confident and consistent in the planning and delivery of the school's chosen approach.

Context

- Leadership and staffing have stabilised since the previous section 5 inspection. Since the section 8 monitoring visit in February 2020, there have been no changes to key personnel. The intervention board of governors remains in place.
- Since the autumn term 2020, approximately 80% of pupils have experienced periods of remote education because of COVID-19. This includes all pupils in Years 1, 2 and 4.
- At the time of this inspection, the school was open to vulnerable pupils and the children of key workers. Approximately 80% of pupils were learning remotely. Since 5 January 2021, almost all pupils with an education, health and care plan have been attending school. Leaders have offered places to all pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Currently half of these are attending.
- Currently, approximately 20% of staff are absent or working from home due to COVID-19. Any staff absence is covered by redeployment from within the school team.

Main findings

- You have put in place a robust remote education offer to ensure that those pupils who are working from home continue with their learning. You have provided training and support for staff, pupils and parents. As a result, they are increasingly confident in using the technology required. You have considered carefully the needs of individual pupils. Your remote offer extends beyond English and mathematics and includes subjects such as art, science and physical education. You are carefully tracking pupils' engagement with their remote learning, following up swiftly wherever necessary. Consequently, the number of pupils engaging in remote learning has increased significantly compared to the first lockdown.
- Pupils who are attending told inspectors they feel safe and happy in school. They too are receiving the same strong provision, enjoying a range of subjects and activities on site. Parents, who shared their views during the inspection, were highly positive about the support they and their children receive.

- When schools partially closed on 23 March 2020, leaders were in the process of carefully considering the curriculum, including the school's approach to the teaching of mathematics. Implementation of this work had started but has dwindled. Leaders now have clear plans in place to regain momentum so that teachers have the highest levels of expertise and confidence in teaching mathematics.
- Your work to develop the role of curriculum leaders and improve teaching through appropriate professional development has, due to the current circumstances, also slowed. Nonetheless, teachers have successfully adapted the curriculum so that it can be taught in school and remotely. The actions that you, the trust and your leadership team have put in place mean that pupils are being provided with a strong educational offer in the current context. You have firm plans in place to continue the work already started in developing the curriculum once things return to normal.
- Reading remains a top priority. You have made sure that pupils in school and those working at home continue with their phonics lessons every day. Teachers are being supported to deliver high-quality phonics teaching. One-to-one support is provided for those who need it, both in school and remotely. You have plans to ensure pupils have remote access to books that match the sounds they are learning in the very near future.
- The school's strong inclusive ethos has underpinned leaders' commitment to meeting the needs of all pupils. This includes the most vulnerable pupils and those with SEND. When pupils with SEND have been unable to attend school, leaders have offered bespoke provision including specialist training and support for parents.
- As leaders are continuing to develop the curriculum, they are keeping the needs of pupils with SEND in sharp focus to ensure that this group of pupils receive a broad and balanced curriculum. Over time, strong leadership in this area of the school's work has meant that staff have developed a clear understanding of the support that pupils need in order to be successful.
- The intervention board is continuing to provide support and challenge to school leaders. Board members demonstrate a clear understanding of the actions needed to drive improvement plans, as well as the daily challenges that leaders currently face. Board members have assured themselves about the quality of education that pupils are currently receiving. The intervention board is taking measured steps for the future governance of the school. This includes a review of its structure.
- The trust is continuing to support school leaders effectively. Central services provided by the trust, in areas such as human resources and facilities, have enabled school leaders to remain focused on the needs of pupils and the

school's remote learning offer. In addition, the trust continues to support the school to effect improvement.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. We held meetings with the executive headteacher, senior leaders, curriculum leaders, the director of excellence and standards and the chief operating officer of the REAch2 Academy Trust, who is also the chair of the intervention board, as well as pupils and staff to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

We also discussed and looked at the school's curriculum plans and viewed samples of learning that are being delivered remotely.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the intervention board, the chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer of REAch2 Academy Trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Kent. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Frances Nation
Her Majesty's Inspector