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Samantha Roach
Executive Principal
Tudor Grange Samworth Academy, A Church of England School
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Dear Mrs Roach

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Tudor Grange Samworth Academy, A Church of England School

Following my remote inspection with Steve Varnam, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), of your school on 25 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 have serious weaknesses.

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 have serious weaknesses at its previous section 5 inspection. The school's most recent section 5 inspection took place in October 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:

- revised curriculum plans take into account what pupils know already from their learning in previous key stages
- pupils who have not attended remote education lessons regularly, and those with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND) who are learning at home, receive support when they return to school on site, so that their knowledge is secure
- the key stage 3 curriculum is equally ambitious in all subjects.

Context

- In January 2021, you took over the leadership of the school, having worked with the school previously. An associate principal from the trust is now based at the school full time.
- A senior leader became the designated safeguarding leader in January 2021. A new deputy head of the primary phase has joined the school since the previous monitoring inspection.
- Two fifths of all pupils had to spend a period of time learning at home during the autumn term 2020. Pupils in Year 8 were affected more than others.
- Currently, most pupils are being educated remotely. Over half of all vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are being educated on site.
- At the time of this inspection, a very small proportion of staff were absent due to COVID-19.

Main findings

- There have been some improvements in the quality of education since the previous monitoring inspection. Responding to COVID-19 has caused some loss of momentum. However, leaders are taking the right actions to ensure that pupils receive education at this time.
- Leaders have clear expectations of how teachers should plan and deliver the curriculum for pupils learning on site or at home. Curriculum leaders identify the important knowledge they want pupils to learn and when. In mathematics, the curriculum follows a logical order, with opportunities for pupils to revisit important ideas. Teachers weave new knowledge into what pupils know already. For example, in geography, pupils complete 'geog your memory' tasks. Not all curriculum plans pay close enough attention to what

pupils have learned in the previous phases of education, particularly in the early years.

- Pupils make their option choices at the end of Year 8. In Year 9, they study these options, as well as an enrichment curriculum that covers other subjects. The enrichment curriculum is not ambitious enough in subjects that pupils have not opted to study at key stage 4.
- Leaders supply electronic devices so that pupils at home can access education online. Staff provide appropriate support so that pupils and their families can use this technology well. A small minority of pupils follow the same curriculum using paper-based resources.
- Teachers deliver the usual curriculum to pupils in Years 7 to 11, with only minor changes. They use online quizzes to check closely that pupils understand the work. For pupils in Years 1 to 6, remote education focuses on mathematics, writing and reading. Leaders have considered how they will adapt curriculum plans in other subjects when all primary-aged pupils are back on site.
- Leaders make sure that pupils who are in the early stages of reading are a priority. Teachers deliver remote phonics sessions successfully. Teachers match reading books and electronic texts to each pupil's phonic knowledge. Younger pupils we spoke to typically said they enjoy reading and read 'lots'. Adults support older pupils who are learning in school to improve how well they read and understand text.
- Leaders respond quickly when a pupil is reluctant to engage with remote education, particularly when leaders have concerns about a pupil's mental health. Because of leaders' actions, pupils' attendance has improved since the start of the current national lockdown. However, a significant minority of pupils are not attending lessons regularly. Leaders have planned extra help for these pupils when school reopens fully.
- Most pupils with SEND study the same curriculum as their peers. Teachers consider how to meet these pupils' needs as part of their planning. During the current circumstances, leaders make sure that those pupils who attend the school's 'blossom unit' get effective support. However, this approach means that leaders are less able to support those pupils with SEND who are learning at home.
- Curriculum leaders plan to carry out assessments with Year 11 pupils when they return to school. They aim to revisit parts of courses where pupils do not have secure subject knowledge. Leaders are helping these pupils prepare for the next stage of their education.
- Trust leaders provide senior leaders with effective support and challenge, so that the school can continue to improve. The trust has managed recent

changes to the school's leadership effectively. Trust specialists have worked closely with curriculum leaders to adapt curriculum plans and improve reading. During the current circumstances, the trust has provided more financial resources to ensure that all pupils can access education remotely.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. We spoke to you, members of the senior leadership team, the special educational needs coordinator and curriculum leaders for reading, geography and mathematics. We held meetings with the chair of the local governing body, who is also a trustee, and the chief executive officer of the Tudor Grange Academy Trust to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

An inspector observed three pupils reading to a member of staff. We considered information about the curriculum and the school's remote education provision, as well as other documentation provided by school leaders. We looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 11 free-text responses, and 62 staff questionnaires. We also reviewed pupils' and parents' and carers' responses to school surveys about remote education.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer of the Tudor Grange Academies Trust, the director of education for the Diocese of Leicester, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Leicester. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Rachel Tordoff
Her Majesty's Inspector