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Paul Campbell
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Dear Mr Campbell

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of Eastbrook School

Following my remote inspection with Jasper Green, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), of your school on 3 and 4 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 improvement.

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 has received two judgements of requires improvement. The school's most recent section 5 inspection took place in January and February 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.

Context

- A new executive headteacher has been appointed since the school was last inspected. A few new middle leaders joined the school in September 2019, and the size of the senior leadership team has been reduced.
- Across the autumn term 2020, approximately 40% of primary pupils and 50% of secondary pupils had at least one day working remotely. No class or year-group 'bubbles' had to close in the primary school. In the secondary school, some Year 11 pupils had to work remotely three times.
- At the time of this inspection, approximately 75% of primary-aged pupils were being educated at home. In the secondary phase, 95% of pupils were being educated at home.
- In the primary phase, approximately 50% of vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) were attending on site at the time of this inspection. In the secondary phase, approximately 40% of vulnerable pupils and 25% of pupils with SEND were on site.

Main findings

- Since your appointment, you have focused on the key priorities for improvement. Leaders and staff have clearer expectations for pupils' behaviour than was previously the case. Recently, you and your team have extended these expectations to remote education. Pupils know how they should behave, both around school and when they are learning at home. Improvements to behaviour have supported leaders' work to provide education in the current circumstances.
- You have strong support for the actions you have taken and continue to take during the pandemic. Most staff and parents and carers that responded to the Ofsted surveys agreed with what you are doing to steer the school to a better place. In particular, parents are pleased with the care staff have shown for pupils' well-being while they have been learning remotely.
- Before the first lockdown, leaders reviewed the order in which concepts are taught in different subjects. Changes were made to curriculum plans, with greater detail provided on what knowledge pupils should be taught. Currently, subject leaders are reviewing the plans again to ensure that pupils can continue to learn all aspects of the curriculum. This type of adjustment is ongoing, responding to pupils' needs as they arise. For example, in the sixth form, science practicals were delivered in the autumn term, in case the school needed to partially close in the future. This ensured that students did not fall behind in the work they needed to complete.
- Leaders have prioritised the teaching of reading in the early years and key stage 1. The development of language and communication skills is now

threaded through the curriculum in the early years. Extra daily reading sessions are being delivered remotely for pupils in Years 1 and 2. These sessions focus on making sure that pupils stay on track with their reading. In addition, leaders have improved the reading curriculum in Year 7. For instance, subject content is introduced to ensure that pupils build on what they were previously taught.

- Leaders have ensured that school-based social workers continue to provide the well-being therapies that vulnerable pupils need to maintain their focus on learning. This includes vulnerable pupils in Year 11, attending school on site or learning remotely. Leaders and staff are keeping a close eye on how well all Year 11 pupils are learning. They expect pupils to do their best in all subjects and are quick to support those who need extra help.
- Currently, there are significantly fewer sixth-form students than previous years. To maintain a broad curriculum for current students, leaders have formed a consortium with other local schools. This means students can study subjects that the school's sixth form is unable to offer. During the current circumstances, remote education is available in all curriculum subjects. However, the current programme does not meet the needs of the wide range of students that leaders want to attract. Leaders have credible plans to improve the curriculum offer in the coming months. These plans have been informed by students' needs and aspirations.
- Many pupils with SEND are currently attending school. Leaders and staff have ensured that these pupils' education has, as far as possible, continued seamlessly. This is the case for pupils on site or at home. Tailored support is provided to these pupils when they are learning on site. For example, pupils continue to receive help to develop their communication skills. Leaders have deployed teaching assistants skilfully to support pupils with SEND in 'breakout rooms' when they are learning remotely.
- The governing body has recruited members with areas of expertise that match the needs of the school. For example, the appointment of governors with expertise in primary education and inclusion has helped to provide appropriate support and challenge in these key areas. However, governors are not giving sufficient attention to leaders' actions to address the areas for improvement in the sixth form. This area of leaders' work requires further scrutiny from governors.
- The local authority has paved the way for supportive links with other local schools. This has enabled leaders to make improvements to the way the curriculum is delivered remotely. Effective practice has been shared in both directions, resulting in further re-shaping of the curriculum and how it is assessed.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. We held meetings with the executive headteacher and other senior and middle leaders. We also met with those responsible for governance and a representative of the local authority to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

We met two groups of pupils and reviewed a sample of recorded lessons that had been delivered 'live', in both the primary and secondary sections of the school.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Barking and Dagenham. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Nasim Butt
Her Majesty's Inspector