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Dear Mrs Thompson

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of The Compass Academy

Following my remote inspection with Bryony Freeman, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), of your school on 18 March 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.

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 successive judgements of requires improvement. The school's most recent section 5 inspection took place in April 2018.

Having considered all the evidence and taking into account the impact of COVID-19 (coronavirus) 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:

- revise the school's curriculum policy so that it accurately reflects current provision and outlines clearly how the different aspects of the curriculum fit together to meet the needs of all pupils
- ensure that the impact of the revised curriculum is evaluated to check the difference it is making to pupils' learning and development
- support all staff to develop pupils' ability to communicate effectively through spoken language.

Context

- In March 2019, the school joined The Sentamu Academy Learning Trust. Since the previous inspection, a completely new governing body has been put in place. Key senior leadership appointments have been made and the school now has a fully staffed leadership team. Of the total number of teaching staff, 80% have been recruited since the previous inspection.
- Almost all pupils received a blended approach to education at the start of the spring term. They attended on-site lessons as well as engaging in remote learning at home. This included vulnerable pupils and those with education, health and care plans.
- At the time of this inspection, all pupils were attending on site.
- Leaders were managing a small number of long-term staff absences at the time of this inspection. Leaders have recruited successfully to cover this staff absence.

Main findings

- Leaders, governors and staff have worked collaboratively and thoughtfully to provide education in the current circumstances. Staff were positive about the school and the changes you have made. They feel well supported, well trained, and 'solid' as a team.
- By the start of the pandemic, you had begun to revise your curriculum to address the weaknesses identified at the time of the previous inspection. During the pandemic, you continued to develop and implement the revised curriculum. At the start of the spring term, 97% of pupils attended on site as part of your blended learning approach. There were also extremely high levels of engagement with remote learning. You have introduced a range of appropriate checks on pupils' learning and development. Nevertheless, leaders need to evaluate the impact of curriculum changes on pupils' progression in their knowledge and understanding.

- The curriculum is broad and covers the subjects of the national curriculum. At the time of the previous inspection, music was not taught. You have ensured that music is now part of the curriculum, along with drama. Staff have made sensible adjustments to the content of the curriculum in order to comply with the school's safety guidelines relating to COVID-19.
- You have ensured that the curriculum continues to place a strong emphasis on pupils' personal development, mental health and well-being. Pupils talked positively about the 'life' curriculum. Your own pupil survey also gave you very positive feedback.
- There are several new aspects to the school's curriculum that have been designed to support pupils' individual needs. The most vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities attend the nurture group. Their curriculum is organised in a thematic way. Teachers incorporate pupils' personalised plans, pathways and targets effectively when they plan learning.
- Your current curriculum policy does not reflect fully the significant changes you have made to benefit your pupils. Currently, it does not inform parents and carers about how all the aspects of your provision work together to meet the needs of pupils.
- Leaders have introduced additional teaching to support pupils' reading development. They have also prioritised daily reading for all pupils. During the third national lockdown, leaders made sure that all pupils had books to read at home. Leaders have identified that a small number of pupils need further support with developing their early reading and phonics skills. As a result, staff have received training to implement sessions to provide pupils with extra help.
- Teaching staff strive to deliver the curriculum in a way that interests and challenges pupils. For example, in English they choose thought-provoking resources that motivate pupils to develop and practise essential knowledge in reading and writing. Occasionally, the delivery of the English curriculum overlooks strengthening pupils' ability to express themselves through spoken language.
- Governors are knowledgeable about the school and are ambitious for its pupils. They are clear about the progress they believe the school has made since its previous inspection. Governors make sure that they have the information they need to hold the school to account. They routinely seek the views of staff and visit the school.
- You and your staff have collaborated well with a partner school in the trust. This has been beneficial to your thinking about, and delivery of, the curriculum, both remotely and in school.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. We spoke to you, the executive principal and other senior leaders, teachers, and the chair of the governing body to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

We also sampled parts of recorded lessons and other aspects of the school's curriculum offer. We spoke to some pupils and we scrutinised curriculum documentation. We looked at the two responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and 15 staff questionnaires. We also reviewed the responses to your pupil survey.

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

Yours sincerely

Ruth Dollner
Her Majesty's Inspector