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Liz Furber
Executive Principal
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Dear Mrs Furber

Additional, remote monitoring inspection of All Saints Academy Dunstable

Following my remote inspection with Liz Smith, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), of your school on 2 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.

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 successive judgements of requires improvement. The school's most recent section 5 inspection took place in May 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 that the content of the school's curriculum is as broad and rigorous as the national curriculum and that important knowledge is sequenced in a way that helps pupils to learn and remember more
- ✍ ensure that the curriculum is implemented effectively in all subjects and is ambitious about what all pupils can learn
- ✍ implement the planned programme to support the weakest readers in Year 7 and ensure that adults have the knowledge and expertise to teach early reading effectively.

Context

- ✍ Since the previous inspection there have been changes in the senior leadership team. Three deputy principals were appointed in the spring term 2020. You have changed the way subject leadership is organised. Several directors of learning are new to post.
- ✍ Across the autumn term 2020, all pupils in year groups other than Year 7 received education remotely. Years 8, 10, 12 and 13 each had to isolate once. Year 9 had to isolate on two occasions. All of Year 11 had to isolate on one occasion and some of the year group had to do so again later in the term.
- ✍ At the time of this inspection, about 95% of pupils were being educated at home. Just under 25% of pupils with education, health and care plans were attending on site. About 20% of vulnerable pupils were accessing education on site.

Main findings

- ✍ Leaders have ensured that pupils can receive education at this time. Pupils have a daily timetable. They follow the same lessons, whether in school or at home. Pupils told us that they were learning and not just being kept busy. Most parents were positive about leaders' actions to provide remote education.
- ✍ Leaders introduced a new curriculum in September, called the creative curriculum. The curriculum is not yet fully developed. The subject content is not always comparable to the national curriculum. Some parts of computing and design technology are either covered briefly or not at all. Leaders are working to ensure that knowledge in all subjects is organised and taught in ways that help all pupils to learn and remember it. Some leaders are less clear about the subject knowledge that pupils will learn.
- ✍ Leaders have adapted curriculum plans to deliver education remotely. Pupils in Year 11 and the sixth form have live lessons. Other year groups have pre-

prepared lessons, following their usual timetable. Teachers are available online to provide extra help and check on pupils' learning. Pupils complete work in booklets for the 'creative curriculum'. Some booklets are adapted to give pupils more help to complete tasks. Occasionally, some teachers are not appropriately ambitious about what all pupils can learn online. When this happens work can be too easy or too hard for some pupils.

- ✍ Leaders have identified the things in lessons that they believe help pupils to learn well. Leaders are checking that teachers include these things in their lessons. Teachers have found alternative ways to explain and model learning to pupils through online resources. Teachers' checks on what pupils have learned are continuing as usual.
- ✍ Pupils currently in school follow the same lessons as those at home. Teachers and student support workers are in school to supervise and provide help if pupils need it. Teachers check that pupils working at home join in with online lessons and return work. Staff follow up any concerns about pupils' participation. They make extra checks on the welfare of vulnerable pupils.
- ✍ Year 11 and sixth-form pupils are continuing to study their examination courses and prepare for assessments. However, leaders have found that some Year 11 pupils are less motivated during this national lockdown. Leaders are continuing to provide advice and guidance to help pupils decide what they will do at the end of their studies.
- ✍ Leaders have been slow at providing extra help for those pupils in Year 7 who need additional help to catch up in their reading. Delays have been caused by changes in staffing and COVID-19. Leaders have chosen a programme to help improve these pupils' reading skills. Some adults have had training to deliver this programme. However, it has not been introduced. Leaders plan to begin the programme when pupils return to school.
- ✍ Leaders check that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) join in with remote learning. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) provides help if they cannot. A small number of pupils with SEND are focusing mainly on English and mathematics currently. The SENCo is using what she knows about what individual pupils are learning to plan support for when they return to school.
- ✍ Trustees check regularly on the work of the school. They have questioned leaders about the new curriculum and the reasoning behind it. Trustees have a good understanding of the education being provided at this time.
- ✍ You told us that the public health department of the local authority has provided useful challenge and support about safely opening the school during the pandemic. The Diocese of St Albans has provided training and support to help you thread the school's ethos and values through the curriculum.

Evidence

This inspection was conducted remotely. We spoke to you, other senior leaders, four directors of learning, the SENCo, pastoral staff, the chair of trustees and one other member of the trust board to discuss leaders' actions to provide education to all pupils during a national lockdown.

We also spoke to a group of pupils and watched some online lessons. An inspector heard a group of pupils read. We looked at 109 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including 64 free-text responses, and 53 staff questionnaires.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, the director of education for the Diocese of St Albans, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Central Bedfordshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Paul Wilson
Her Majesty's Inspector