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Dear Ms Wickham

Serious weaknesses monitoring inspection of Teignmouth Community School, Exeter Road

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 5 March 2024, on behalf of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills. The monitoring inspection was carried out under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005 and was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses following the graded (section 5) inspection that took place in March 2023.

The purpose of a monitoring inspection is not to grade the school's overall effectiveness, but to identify and report on the school's progress. It is to highlight to the school and parents any improvements that school leaders have made since the school's previous graded inspection.

During the inspection, I discussed with you and other senior leaders, the chief executive officer and director of education of the trust, other staff, the chair of trustees and governors the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent graded inspection. We discussed the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. I evaluated the impact of the schools' work to date, including through reviewing strategic documents, visiting lessons and meeting groups of pupils. I have considered all of this in coming to my judgement.

Leaders have made progress to improve the school, but more work is necessary for the school to be no longer judged as having serious weaknesses.

The progress made towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation

Since your last inspection, you have significantly restructured and expanded the senior leadership team. This includes appointing an experienced special educational needs co-ordinator to your senior team. You have strengthened the school's middle leadership capacity and appointed experienced leaders to key curriculum positions. These changes have enabled the school to focus tightly on the areas of priority identified during the previous inspection. Leaders at all levels now have a shared vision for high-quality education and appreciate the pace of change needed.

There have been fundamental changes to the structure of the curriculum in all subject areas. The curriculum intent is substantially more ambitious and better focused on preparing pupils for external examinations and future studies. Although a significant amount of work has taken place, leaders recognise that further review and adaptations will be needed as this new curriculum is implemented.

The implementation of the curriculum is improving. Extensive professional development has been provided by the trust to ensure that teachers have the skills and knowledge needed to deliver the new curriculum. As leaders, you have focused on core elements of teaching, such as questioning and retrieval, to begin to secure improvements in pupils' learning over time. Where the implementation of the curriculum is less strong, leaders are aware and are taking steps to support and address this weakness.

Adults are now raising expectations of what pupils should know and be able to do. For example, pupils now complete significant levels of extended writing across the wider curriculum. Pupils' current work shows how their knowledge is building over the course of their studies. However, older pupils, who have not benefited from the improved curriculum until recently, continue to have significant gaps in their knowledge and understanding. You and your leaders appreciate that this needs to be addressed rapidly.

The provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) has required substantial reform. You have prioritised addressing the weaknesses in identifying the needs of pupils with SEND. This has prompted a review of information provided to teachers. This will better help them plan to meet the needs of pupils within the wider curriculum. The scale of this task has been significant and so this work is still ongoing.

Disadvantaged pupils are now closely monitored by you and other leaders across the school. These pupils are beginning to benefit from the improvements in the wider curriculum. You have also identified the need to further improve their behaviour and attendance. The new 'Bridge' facility has opened to support persistently absent pupils to return to school. Although in its infancy, there is some evidence of success for this initiative.

The new personal development curriculum has been in place since September 2023. The school have significantly changed the curriculum and delivery methods to enable it to be taught by a team of specifically trained staff. Pupils comment that lessons are now taken more seriously. Although the curriculum is still being developed, pupils are beginning to

become better prepared for adult life. Pupils also appreciate the increase in extra-curricular and leadership opportunities that the school are now providing.

You and the senior team have demonstrated clarity about the rationale behind the changes that you have made. The trust has provided effective support to enable changes to be made quickly and in a sustainable way. External support has been commissioned to both facilitate change and provide independent scrutiny. You have now introduced school level quality assurance systems to enable evaluation of the emerging impacts of the changes. Further embedding this work is rightly a key priority for you and your leadership team.

This has been a significant period of change for you and your staff. However, throughout this time there has been a consideration of the workload and well-being of all staff. Staff share your desire to improve the quality of education provided by the school and appreciate the importance of change.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, and the CEO of the Ivy Education Trust, the Department for Education's regional director and the director of children's services for Devon. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Sara Berry
His Majesty's Inspector