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Will Thompson
Principal
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Dear Mr Thompson

Ofsted visit to The Brittons Academy

Following my visit with Lisa Strong, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 29 September 2020, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the visit's findings. Thank you for the time you made available to discuss your actions since September 2020, when the government expected all schools to open fully to all pupils.

This visit was conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 (as amended) and in accordance with Ofsted's published procedures for visiting schools while routine inspections are temporarily suspended.

Ofsted's visits to schools during the autumn term are not inspections. We are not giving graded judgements. We did not undertake the usual range of inspection activities and were unable to check other sources of evidence, such as visits to lessons or looking at pupils' work. The content of this letter gives an overview of our discussions about what has happened in your school this term.

During the visit, we spoke to you and the senior leadership team, including the senior leader responsible for safeguarding. We did not speak to pupils because of the protective measures in place.

Context

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills is leading Ofsted's work into how England's education system is managing the return to full

education for pupils, following an extended break in formal schooling due to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic.

In undertaking this focused work, HMI are visiting a broad range of schools. HMI will visit a sample of:

- approximately 1,200 schools across all Ofsted grades (outstanding, good, requires improvement and inadequate)
- maintained schools, academies and free schools, special schools and centres of alternative provision, including those in cities, and coastal, town or rural communities.

The information from this visit will feed into Ofsted's national reporting so that the insights can be shared with the government and the education sector. We did not find any significant concerns during the visit. In such a case, an inspection report would be published on our website and available to parents and carers.

We did not consider your response to COVID-19 during the spring and summer terms 2020, when the school was not open to all pupils.

From this visit, inspectors noted that:

- The school opened for all pupils on 7 September 2020. Nearly all pupils are attending full time. Five pupils attend part time and eight are not in school. School leaders know the reasons for their absence. Fifty-six pupils are currently self-isolating.
- Attendance is a little lower than at the same time last year. At the time of the visit, 23 pupils in Year 10 had been sent home to self-isolate. Through weekly newsletters, contact with parents and assemblies, leaders encourage pupils to attend school regularly. Leaders have worked to reassure parents that the school's arrangements ensure their children's safety.
- All pupils are studying their usual curriculum. Work in some practical subjects is limited. Leaders plan to reintroduce practical work for all pupils after half term.
- Leaders check pupils' starting points by setting small tests and quizzes. More-formal tests are planned for next term. Leaders identify that developing the ability of pupils to remember what they have learned earlier is a priority.
- All pupils in Years 7 to 9 are following the national curriculum. Currently, Year 7 and Year 8 pupils do not have practical work in subjects such as design and technology, and cooking. They still follow a course in these subjects, but it is mostly written work. Practical work has recently been introduced for Year 9 pupils. It will be introduced for Year 7 and Year 8 pupils over the coming weeks.

- Pupils in Years 10 and 11 are studying the full range of examination subjects, including English, mathematics, science, and personal, social and health education.
- Leaders have updated the school's computers so that they can run more advanced software programs. Teachers are trained to use these programs. A new computer system for teaching remotely is being introduced after half term, with training for teachers planned.

Thank you again for contributing to this important national work. The views and experiences you have shared will help to inform future policy.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Havering. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Brian Oppenheim
Her Majesty's Inspector