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Mrs Rhian Richardson
West Gate School
Glenfield Road
Leicester
Leicestershire
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Dear Mrs Richardson

Ofsted visit to West Gate School

Following my visit with John Lawson, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 1 October 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 members of the senior leadership, including two senior leaders responsible for safeguarding. We did not speak to pupils because of the protective measures you have 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, a different 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 fully to all pupils on 4 September 2020. The vast majority of pupils attend full time.
- Attendance is above that seen during the same period last year. A small proportion of pupils with severe and complex medical needs are being 'shielded' by their families at home, from risks associated with COVID-19. Staff work closely with these pupils and their families to ensure they are safe.
- Currently, pupils are not studying their usual curriculum. Leaders have implemented a temporary curriculum framework. The framework aims to support pupils to be 'safe, engaged and active' learners. Activities focus on developing pupils' social, emotional and mental health, as well as their attitudes to learning.
- Teachers are carrying out ongoing assessments to identify gaps in pupils' learning. This includes reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders intend to use these assessments to help staff plan how and when pupils will return to their usual curriculum pathway. You are confident that all pupils will return to their usual pathway by summer 2021, at the very latest.
- Pupils accessing accredited courses have commenced their coursework. Pupils are currently unable to undertake work experience opportunities or take part in the range of community projects that are part of the usual curriculum.
- You have designed a 'blended' approach to remote learning. This supports pupils to work from home during periods of extended absence from school. It is based on your existing curriculum. You ensure that staff check regularly the engagement, progress and well-being of pupils who are learning remotely.

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 governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Leicester. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Stephanie Innes-Taylor

Her Majesty's Inspector