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Bianca Greenhalgh  
Headteacher  
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West Sussex  
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Dear Ms Greenhalgh

### **Ofsted visit to The Gatwick School**

Following my visit with Julie Sackett, 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, the senior leadership team, including the senior leader responsible for safeguarding, as well as the head of mathematics and the trust's chief executive officer. 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 to pupils on 7 September 2020. All pupils attend full time.
- Leaders have compared attendance at the start of this year with the same period last year. This has shown secondary pupils' attendance is slightly higher this year and primary pupils' attendance is a little lower than a year ago. Staff are in contact with families of pupils who are not yet attending school to support their return.
- All pupils are studying their usual range of subjects. Key stage 3 pupils do not have access to specialist rooms currently because of Covid-19 precautions. This means that practical activities in subjects such as music and science have had to be reduced. The intention is that by summer 2021 these activities will have been reinstated. For primary pupils, additional trips and visits that would normally be offered have had to be suspended for the time being.
- Staff have carried out assessments in reading and mathematics for primary pupils and mathematics only for secondary pupils. They have used these to check what pupils have remembered and can do. The results from these tests show that pupils are generally where teachers would expect them to be at this point in the school year.
- The exception is in Years 1 and 2, where pupils' knowledge and skills in reading are slightly below where teachers expected them to be. Teachers have in place their usual interventions to help pupils catch up. Because the shortfall

in learning is only small, leaders' belief is that this will be enough to help pupils increase their reading skills.

- In mathematics, primary pupils have needed some brief revisiting of topics such as place value but, overall, teachers are pleased with what knowledge and skills pupils have retained.
- The wider curriculum for primary pupils is unchanged. Staff are now checking what knowledge gaps pupils have so that they can shape what they teach next.
- The curriculum at key stages 3 and 4 is unchanged. Pupils have engaged with the remote learning that was in place over the last term. Teachers' assessments have found little evidence of any significant gaps in their learning.
- Pupils who are unable to attend school can access their learning on the school's website. The school is ready to offer this to all pupils should it become necessary in the future. Teachers also provide paper-based materials for the small number of pupils who cannot access the online resources.

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 and the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for West Sussex. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Yasmin Maskatiya  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**