

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Judith Apps
Headteacher
Cauldwell School
Edward Road
Bedford
Bedfordshire
MK42 9DR

Dear Mrs Apps

Ofsted visit to Cauldwell School

Following my visit with Cindy Impey, 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 the senior leadership team, including the 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 fully to all pupils on 7 September 2020.
- Pupils' attendance is similar to the same time last year. Leaders told us that pupils' punctuality has been better than usual. This is because of the additional safety measures that are in place at the start of the school day.
- Leaders have devised a 'recovery curriculum' for this term which prioritises English, mathematics and personal, social, health and relationships education (PSHRE).
- Pupils are studying all curriculum subjects. Teachers are helping pupils develop their core skills of communication, reading, writing and mathematics through their learning in other subjects, for example in geography and history.
- Leaders have adapted the way they assess pupils' learning. This is to help teachers identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills because of the learning pupils have missed due to COVID-19. Leaders, teachers and support staff are working to ensure that pupils get the extra help they need to catch up quickly.
- Leaders have introduced a focused reading lesson in the afternoons. Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 take part in enrichment sessions after school in mathematics, reading, writing and sport. These are to help pupils catch up with learning and the physical activity that they have missed.

- In mathematics, pupils practise calculation and reasoning daily in class and using online programmes. Leaders say that these help staff identify where pupils need challenge and support.
- Leaders have worked across the multi-academy trust (MAT) to devise a 'digital strategy'. This is to make sure that pupils can continue to be taught curriculum subjects remotely in the event of any future lockdown.

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 local advisory board, the chair of the board of trustees, and the chief executive officer, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Bedford. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Katherine Douglas
Her Majesty's Inspector