

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231  
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Maxine Lathbury-Cox  
Headteacher  
Reedswood E-ACT Academy  
Bentley Drive  
Walsall  
West Midlands  
WS2 8RX

Dear Mrs Lathbury-Cox

### **Ofsted visit to Reedswood E-ACT Academy**

Following my visit with Jo Evans, 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, your deputy headteacher and your assistant headteacher. 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:**

- You opened the school to all pupils on 3 September 2020. Apart from a very small number of pupils who are in the process of moving from part-time to full-time timetables, all pupils are expected to attend full time.
- Since the school opened in September, attendance has varied from week to week. It is currently below your normal attendance level for this time of year. Attendance has been affected by two class 'bubbles' that have had to self-isolate.
- Pupils are studying most of the usual curriculum and you expect to have returned to your usual curriculum before summer 2021. You have lengthened the school day to allow extra time for pupils to catch up in English and mathematics. You have adjusted the order of content in some subjects because of COVID-19 restrictions. For example, you are not teaching information technology as a subject because pupils would have to share equipment. In personal, social and health education, you are focusing on supporting pupils' mental health and well-being.
- Since September, you and your staff have checked pupils' phonic knowledge. All pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are having daily phonics sessions and pupils who you know have fallen behind are getting additional help to catch up. The youngest children are getting help to address the gaps in their language and communication skills. You are making sure that pupils in Years 3 to 6 are getting extra support to help them with their reading comprehension.
- You know from your checks in mathematics that pupils' fluency in number work has been most affected. Your priority is to improve these skills quickly,

so you have changed the order of the teaching of some topics. For example, pupils will focus on data handling and shape later in the term.

- You have moved from a topic-based approach in your wider curriculum to a subject-based approach. You have done this because you want to deepen pupils' knowledge in each subject. You have adjusted the order in which some subject content is taught because of COVID-19. For example, swimming is now planned to take place in the summer term. You are giving as many pupils as possible access to your forest school because you believe this will improve their well-being.
- You have been able to provide remote education for pupils who have recently had to self-isolate. You say that some pupils need a range of approaches, including paper-based activities. You are confident in using a blended approach in the future, should further remote education be necessary.

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 Walsall. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Deb Jenkins  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**