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2 November 2020

Tim Hughes
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Hughes

Ofsted visit to St Margaret's Academy

Following my visit with Nathan Kemp, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 6 October, 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 deputy headteacher and the chair of the governing body. 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 7 September 2020. Pupils in all year groups attend full time, apart from one pupil who attends part time.
- Pupils' attendance is broadly in line with the normal attendance for this time of year.
- During September, you suspended the usual curriculum to focus on preparing pupils emotionally and socially for school. From October, pupils have begun to study a greater range of subjects.
- Leaders and staff are currently assessing pupils' knowledge in reading, writing and mathematics. You and your staff are using this information to adapt your plans for teaching and the curriculum.
- Teachers have identified gaps in Year 1 and Year 2 pupils' reading skills. Consequently, teachers have adapted the early reading curriculum. You intend to use the COVID-19 catch-up premium funding to provide tailored reading and language support for pupils.
- Using assessment information, teachers have adapted the mathematics curriculum to focus on place value in Years 1 and 2. You are using the COVID-19 catch-up premium to provide some pupils with additional support to help them catch up.
- Teachers are adapting the wider curriculum to address gaps in pupils' knowledge. Teachers use the school's outside space such as the orchard to support pupils' learning.

- You set up an online learning platform for pupils in Reception and Years 3 to 6 and provided learning activities via the website, email and paper copies for pupils in Years 1 to 2. You plan to use this system again should it be needed in the future. You also intend to increase the frequency of telephone contact between pupils and teachers, as well as provide more video lessons, if there were a 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 governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Torbay. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Susan Aykin
Her Majesty's Inspector