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Mandi Collins
Principal
Thomas Estley Community College
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Dear Mrs Collins

Ofsted visit to Thomas Estley Community College

Following my visit with Jayne Ashman, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 15 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 team, including the school's designated 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 to all pupils on Tuesday 1 September 2020. All pupils are expected to attend full time.
- Current attendance is broadly in line with the normal levels of attendance for this time of year.
- All pupils are studying their usual range of subjects. This includes the full range of national curriculum subjects in Years 7, 8 and 9. In Years 10 and 11, pupils are continuing to study the subjects for which they opted.
- Leaders have amended curriculum plans for the practical elements of some subjects, including design technology, physical education, music and science. Leaders have plans to restore the practical elements of learning in these subjects by summer 2021, particularly for pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9.
- Leaders are in the early stages of checking any gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills. In Year 11, additional mock examinations have been arranged in all subjects to support teachers' planning and pupils' learning. Leaders have started to review the results of initial assessments in Years 7, 8 and 9 to help identify pupils' new starting points in all subjects. The curriculum for personal development has been reorganised to promote pupils' understanding of personal well-being and resilience, linked to their experiences of the pandemic.
- Teachers have developed a range of online resources to provide remote learning should this be necessary in case of pupil absence or future local

restrictions. Pupils without access to equipment or who have trouble accessing online resources have been supported.

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 Success Academy Trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Leicestershire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Chris Stevens
Her Majesty's Inspector