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Andrew Murphy
Executive Principal
North Shore Academy
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Dear Mr Murphy

Ofsted visit to North Shore Academy

Following my visit with Jenny Thomas, 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 the senior leadership team, the safeguarding lead and the deputy chief executive. 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:

- Leaders opened the school to all pupils on 2 September 2020. Pupils joined the school gradually over the first week. All pupils are expected to attend the school full time.
- Since the school opened to all pupils, attendance has been increasing. It is in line with the same period in the last academic year.
- Leaders told us that pupils access all curriculum subjects. Curriculum content of some subjects has been adjusted so that pupils revisit missed learning. You said that you plan to return to your usual curriculum by the summer term 2021.
- Leaders say that they have checked what pupils remember as they return to their year groups across the school. Mathematics, science, reading and writing have been prioritised for formal checks. In wider curriculum subjects, teachers are checking what pupils know, and are adjusting their plans for future learning.
- In Years 7 to 9, you told us that you have made checks on what pupils might have missed during the summer term. Pupils are catching up on learning missed during Covid-19 restrictions, without missing out on a wide range of subjects. You have focused on making sure that the Year 7 pupils settle into secondary school.
- In Years 10 and 11, leaders say that all pupils have returned to their usual curriculum subjects. Pupils are continuing to study all of the examination subjects that they opted for. Catch-up programmes are in place to make up for lost learning.

- The school offers remote learning in all subjects. This has been developed throughout the Covid-19 restrictions period.

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 Stockton-on-Tees. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website."

Yours sincerely

Alison Aitchison
Her Majesty's Inspector