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4 November 2020

Felicity Hawkins
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Hawkins

Ofsted visit to Ilminster Avenue E-ACT Academy

Following my visit with Karl Sampson, 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, the deputy headteacher and the family support worker. 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 3 September 2020. Children in the Reception Year attended part time until 21 September 2020, when they all started to come to school every day.
- Pupils' current attendance is similar to this time last year.
- Across the school, pupils are learning the same subjects as usual. Leaders made some changes to the timetable to include more personal, social and health education to support pupils' well-being. These are reducing over time. Leaders expect that the curriculum will be fully back on track in the next term.
- Teachers have checked pupils' knowledge and understanding in reading, phonics and mathematics. They have used this to decide what they need to teach first.
- Leaders have prioritised reading and phonics. In Years 1 and 2, pupils now have two phonics lessons each day. Pupils in Year 3 have extra phonics lessons.
- In mathematics, teachers have been focusing on the important facts that pupils need to know, such as times tables. Teachers have changed their plans so that pupils have time to secure their understanding of number and calculations.
- Teachers are selecting and teaching the most important learning for pupils in other subjects.
- In the Reception Year, teachers are helping children to practise speaking and listening as much as possible.

- There are arrangements in place for any pupils who are not able to come to school. Pupils receive daily tasks to support their learning in reading, writing, mathematics and another subject. They also have an activity to support their personal development each day.

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 E-ACT multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Bristol. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Caroline Dulon
Her Majesty's Inspector