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5 November 2020

Sarah Green  
Principal  
The Ferrars Academy  
Macaulay Road  
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Bedfordshire  
LU4 0LL

Dear Miss Green

### **Ofsted visit to The Ferrars Academy**

Following my visit with Katherine Douglas, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 22 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 the deputy 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:**

- The school reopened for all pupils on 3 September 2020. A very small proportion of pupils are currently attending part time as part of a phased return to school.
- Current attendance is similar to attendance at this point last year.
- You expect to be able to return to the school's usual curriculum by the summer term 2021. Pupils are learning the full range of national curriculum subjects, but you have made some adjustments to when and how some content is taught. For example, in physical education, gymnastics has been moved to the summer term.
- Teachers have assessed progress in reading and found that pupils are behind where you would usually expect them to be at this point. You have put additional phonics sessions into the timetable each day to help pupils to catch up.
- In mathematics, teachers have found that pupils have gaps in reasoning and solving problems. You have adjusted the curriculum to give more time to teaching these aspects of mathematics.
- Although you are giving particular emphasis to English and mathematics, staff are continuing to teach all the subjects in your usual curriculum. You have also decided to continue with educational visits and to allow visitors into the school.

For example, pupils in the Reception Year recently had a ride around the playground on a bus, and Year 1 pupils walked to the local park.

- You have plans in place for providing remote education, should this become necessary. Your intention is that the remote learning will mirror the learning in classrooms as far as possible. For example, staff are recording short videos to introduce and explain the aspects of subjects that pupils will be learning.

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 regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Luton. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Wendy Varney  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**