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Carolyn Roberts
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Dear Mrs Roberts

Ofsted visit to Thomas Tallis School

Following my visit with Lucy Bruce, 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 the senior leadership team, including the senior 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 fully to pupils on 8 September. Prior to that, year-group 'bubbles' attended on different days to find out about the new routines and expectations. All pupils are expected to attend full time.
- Pupils' attendance is below the normal attendance for this time of year. Leaders are working with the parents of pupils who are struggling to attend. This includes informing them about how the school is operating and taking safety precautions to minimise any risks.
- Pupils in all year groups are studying the usual range of subjects, and following safety and mitigation procedures for subjects such as physical education and dance.
- Leaders have made a decision not to use language such as 'lost learning'. This is to support pupils' well-being. Subject leaders have assessed pupils' new starting points and adapted subject plans as they need to, so that pupils can learn and remember new content.
- In Years 7 to 9, adjustments have been made to the school organisation. In mathematics, leaders have changed the Year 9 seating arrangements. In science, additional equipment has been provided so that apparatus can be quarantined between practical activities.
- In Year 11 and Year 13 examination classes, pupils were assessed in June so that teachers could adapt subject plans for a prompt start in September. Leaders ensured that wherever possible, the same teacher continued with the group to ensure continuity.

- Leaders have developed their remote learning policy and how to implement it if and when the school is not fully open. This includes protocols to keep pupils safe online. Pupils isolating at home are provided with online work, complemented by learning booklets. This helps pupils who do not have easy access to the internet and ensures that pupils do not spend too long in front of a screen.

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 and the director of children's services for Greenwich. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Janet Hallett
Her Majesty's Inspector