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Stephen Mulligan
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Mulligan

Ofsted visit to Belle Vue Girls' Academy

Following my visit with Kirsty Godfrey, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 6 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 the senior leadership team, including the designated safeguarding lead. We also met with the director for secondary education and the chief executive officer (CEO) of your multi-academy trust (MAT). We did not speak to pupils because of the protective measures you have 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, a different 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:

- Year 7 pupils started school on Wednesday 2 September 2020. Pupils in Years 8 to 13 were expected to return to school on Thursday 3 September 2020.
- Attendance is below what it was at this time last year. Leaders explained that they are working with specific families to encourage more pupils to attend where they can.
- Pupils in Years 7 to 9 are being taught their usual subjects. Leaders explained that teachers are checking for any gaps in pupils' knowledge. They plan to use the information from the assessments to adapt their schemes of work if needed.
- Pupils in Years 10 to 13 are continuing with all their chosen qualifications. You have changed the sequence of some topics in science and technology. You explained that this is because you want all pupils to have access to the practical aspects of these subjects in case future restrictions prevent them from doing so.

- A quarter of pupils in Year 11 are self-isolating. Any pupils self-isolating have access to online learning. You also use paper-based methods as part of the remote learning package. You plan to continue to use this approach if and when needed.

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

Yours sincerely

Patricia Head
Her Majesty's Inspector