

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



9 November 2020

Jason O'Rourke
Headteacher
Washingborough Academy
School Lane
Washingborough
Lincoln
LN4 1BW

Dear Mr O'Rourke

Ofsted visit to Washingborough Academy

Following my visit with Damien Turrell, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 22 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 you, three senior leaders and a member of the administrative team. 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 all pupils on 3 September 2020. Pupils attend full time.
- Attendance is below that usually seen for this point in the year. Leaders are supporting some parents and carers to feel confident enough to send their children back to school.
- Pupils are studying most of the usual subjects. Singing and swimming are not being taught currently. You plan to return to these later in the year.
- Checks on pupils' skills in reading show that some pupils are not as secure as they should be in phonics. Some older pupils need support to develop their skills to understand the books they read. You have employed an extra member of staff to help pupils to catch up.
- Teachers' checks showed that some pupils have forgotten how to spell words they have previously learned. Teachers are helping pupils to relearn these words.
- Teachers have identified that pupils' arithmetic skills are not as strong as they should be. Pupils are receiving additional support to develop their arithmetic skills.

- In the wider curriculum, teachers are reminding pupils of the school's personal values statements. These values are intended to support pupils to be resilient and motivated to learn.
- You set up a remote learning programme before March 2020. Pupils continue their lessons remotely if they are absent for long periods. Staff check on the progress and well-being of pupils who are learning remotely.

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 of Aurum Academies Trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Lincolnshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Vic Wilkinson
Her Majesty's Inspector