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10 November 2020

Antony Clements  
Interim Headteacher  
Lime Academy Hornbeam  
Folly Lane  
Walthamstow  
London  
E17 5NT

Dear Mr Clements

### **Ofsted visit to Lime Academy Hornbeam**

Following my visit with Andrew Wright, 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 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 opened fully to all pupils on 3 September 2020. All pupils are expected to attend full time.
- Attendance figures are similar to those during the same period last year. At the time of this visit, four groups of pupils were self-isolating at home. Classes are of mixed ages, and so these pupils represent a range of year groups.
- Pupils are following personalised programmes of learning, as they usually would. Staff have adapted the way in which some aspects of pupils' learning is delivered. While you are hopeful that pupils will return to their usual curriculum by the summer term 2021, this is dependent on how long social-distancing measures and other safety-related procedures are in place, as these currently prevent some activities from going ahead.
- Staff have assessed and established pupils' new starting points. They have identified significant gaps in pupils' language and communication skills as well as in their social interactions. Staff and therapists are working together to review pupils' targets. Staff are using focused sessions with pupils to address the regression in pupils' communication skills.
- Leaders have identified gaps in pupils' mathematical development. As part of the mathematics and wider curriculums, pupils would usually go out into the community, such as to shops, to practise handling money. Staff are trying to find ways in school to compensate for pupils not being able to go on these visits.

- Leaders have made changes to the functional skills courses so that pupils can complete these, as originally planned, by summer 2021.
- For pupils who are learning to read, staff have assessed pupils' phonics knowledge. They are implementing the new phonics programme, to help pupils catch up.
- Leaders have established remote-learning procedures. When pupils learn remotely, staff provide a combination of activities which are aligned to each pupil's learning targets. Leaders are finding ways to incorporate therapies into these activities.

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 Lime Trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Waltham Forest. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Gary Rawlings  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**