

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



11 November 2020

Peter Cohen
Executive Headteacher
Oak Bank School
Sandy Lane
Leighton Buzzard
Bedfordshire
LU7 3BE

Dear Mr Cohen

Ofsted visit to Oak Bank School

Following my visit with Cindy Impey, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 8 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, deputy designated safeguarding leader and attendance officer. We also met the chair of governors. 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 to all pupils from 7 September 2020. Pupils initially started on a part-time basis. Full-time education began from 28 September 2020.
- Pupils' attendance is better than it was at this time last year. You attribute this to the strong relationships you have with parents and carers.
- You have prioritised pupils' social and emotional development and are checking how well pupils have returned to school. You are pleased with how pupils have returned ready to learn and the emotional resilience pupils have shown. Adults have re-established routines and expectations for behaviour and you told us that pupils are happy to be back at school.
- Pupils are studying their usual range of subjects in Years 7, 8 and 9. Practical subjects such as bicycle maintenance and animal care have continued to be taught.
- Pupils in Years 10 and 11, and students in the sixth form, have access to the courses and qualifications that they had previously chosen. Pupils can still study a number of vocational courses that are being offered by local external providers.
- Teachers are currently checking pupils' academic learning and understanding. Your staff will use this information to set new targets and adapt teaching to suit pupils' needs.

- You have provided remote learning for the times when pupils are studying at home. Pupils in school are using more digital technology in lessons, such as those in English and mathematics. You are keen that teachers and pupils do not lose the skills that they have gained. You are ready to use remote learning should the need arise.

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

Yours sincerely

Kim Hall
Her Majesty's Inspector