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Mr Darren Glover
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Glover

Ofsted visit to Haydon Bridge Community High School and Sports College

Following my visit with Graham Findlay, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 13 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 all pupils on 4 September 2020. Pupils are expected to attend full time.
- Leaders said that attendance is slightly lower than normal for this time of year. A very small number of pupils are having additional support from staff and external agencies to improve their attendance.
- You explained that pupils are studying most of the subjects that they usually would. In Years 7 and 8, pupils are not studying business studies and in Years 9, 10 and 11, pupils have chosen one less option subject than they normally would. These changes are to allow pupils extra time to catch up with lost or missed learning due to the COVID-19 restrictions. You aim to return all pupils to the full range of subjects by summer term 2021.
- Extra time is being spent on fostering pupils' well-being. You identified that not all pupils returned to school feeling confident and ready to learn and wanted to offer pupils more opportunities to talk and adjust.
- Leaders told us they checked pupils' new starting points through tests and in discussions with pupils. In some subjects, leaders found that learning was lost or missed during the school's partial closure due to COVID-19 restrictions. To catch up, pupils in Years 7 and 8 are focusing on reading comprehension, grammar and some aspects of mathematics, such as times tables, while in Years 9, 10 and 11, study skills, including retrieval, are being prioritised.

- Leaders plan to allow subjects to be delivered remotely should this be needed. A mix of online learning, direct teaching and private study tasks may be used. Leaders explained that paper-based learning and work will be available where appropriate.

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 Northumberland. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Fiona Manuel
Her Majesty's Inspector