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Mark Rose
Principal
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Dear Mr Rose

Ofsted visit to Orchard Manor School

Following my visit with Simon Rowe, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 19 October, 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 your senior leadership 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 for all pupils to attend full time on 14 September 2020. This followed a 'transition week' that began on 7 September 2020, when pupils attended on a part-time basis.
- Pupils' attendance is broadly in line with the attendance rate typically seen at this time of year.
- Across the school, pupils are studying the subjects that they were studying prior to March 2020. The only aspects of the curriculum that pupils are not currently doing are swimming and contact team sports.
- Pupils in Years 10 and 11 and post-16 students are working towards qualifications in the same courses as they were in March 2020. In addition, pupils in Year 10 are now studying for ASDAN qualifications as part of the school's life skills curriculum.
- Teachers and other staff are using the school's existing approach to assessment to establish pupils' new starting points now they have returned to school. You are using a programme of one-to-one and other interventions to help pupils to catch up. You plan to use additional funding to support this programme.
- You and your staff have prioritised particular aspects of the curriculum to reflect the specific needs of pupils as they return to school. For example, you have focused on developing the phonic knowledge of early readers, whatever their age. This was because teachers' assessments identified reading as an area where some pupils need to catch up.

- In mathematics, teachers are identifying knowledge in which pupils are secure, such as place value, and which knowledge they need to reinforce due to the impact of pupils' missing out on time at school.
- Leaders and teachers have plans in place to deliver the curriculum remotely for either individual pupils or groups, should that prove to be necessary. In doing this, staff will build on their experience of providing remote education earlier in the year. Leaders expect pupils learning remotely to follow as closely as possible the same curriculum as they would if they were in school.

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

Yours sincerely

Stephen Lee
Her Majesty's Inspector