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David Burnham
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Dear Mr Burnham

Ofsted visit to Thrybergh Academy and Sports College

Following my visit with James Duncan, 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 senior leaders, including those 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 was opened to all pupils from 14 September. All pupils are expected to attend full time.
- Attendance is similar to the school's normal attendance for this time of year.
- All pupils are studying their usual range of subjects. However, you have made some changes to subject content and the order in which things are taught. You intend that pupils will return to your full curriculum by September 2021.
- In Reception to Year 6 you have checked pupils' reading. You have identified gaps in their phonics knowledge as a result of the school's partial closure during the spring and summer terms 2020, and are addressing them. You are working on skills such as inference and deduction with fluent readers.
- In Reception to Year 6 you have checked pupils' mathematical knowledge to assess what they can remember, following the school's partial closure. As a result, in Reception to Year 4 you are working on place value. In Years 5 and 6 your focus is on methods of calculation.
- In Reception to Year 6 you are checking pupils' knowledge and understanding across the wider curriculum. You are adapting the curriculum for each subject to make sure that pupils are able to recover their lost learning.
- In Years 7 to 9 you have found that pupils do not have as much stamina and independence as you would normally expect. In Year 7 you are focusing on improving writing, speaking and reading aloud. In Years 8 and 9 you are

checking that pupils have the fundamental skills they need in each subject to be able to access future learning.

- In Years 10 and 11 pupils are continuing to study all their exam subjects. You have checked for gaps in knowledge as a result of the school's partial closure, and are working to address them.
- You have plans to enable teachers to deliver the curriculum remotely if there is a need to do this as a result of further restrictions. Pupils will be able to take part in live lessons that will be delivered by their teachers. You are investing in new technology to allow all pupils to access this.

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 multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Rotherham. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Chris Cook
Her Majesty's Inspector