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11 November 2020

David Curry  
Headteacher  
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Cheshire  
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Dear Mr Curry

### **Ofsted visit to Bishop Heber High School**

Following my visit with Jo Olsson, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 21 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 members of 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:**

- You opened the school to pupils in Year 7 on 2 September 2020. You asked pupils and students in other year groups to return to school a year group at a time. By 7 September 2020, all pupils and students were expected to attend full time.
- You told us that attendance is slightly lower than the usual attendance rates at this time of year. You are working closely with the families of pupils and students who are absent.
- Pupils in Years 7 to 9 are studying all of the subjects that are usually on the school's curriculum, but with some adaptations. You explained that these pupils stay in one classroom for almost all of their lessons. This means that pupils are not able to take part in the full range of practical activities that are usually on offer. You told us that pupils will resume the usual curriculum when they are able to access all specialist classrooms.
- Pupils in Years 10 to 11, and students in the sixth form, are studying all of the subjects that are usually on the school's curriculum, including those that they will be examined in. You explained that they have been given priority access to the specialist classrooms and equipment that they need to cover the full content of the examination courses.
- You told us that teachers have identified what pupils in Year 11 and students in Year 13 have remembered and forgotten since March 2020. You have asked teachers to find out if pupils and students in other year groups have any gaps

in their knowledge, understanding and skills. You explained that teachers are using this information to make decisions about what pupils and students should learn next.

- You have decided to deliver remote education through an online system. This allows pupils and students to participate in lessons when they cannot be in school. You told us that this system has helped pupils and students to access the planned curriculum when they have had to work remotely this term.

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 Cheshire West and Chester. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Michael Pennington  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**