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Victoria Jackson
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Dear Ms Jackson

Ofsted visit to Caldew School

Following my visit with Linda Emmett, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 6 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 with you and members of your 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 expect all pupils, including students in the sixth form, to attend full time. The school reopened to all pupils and students on 7 September 2020.
- Pupils' attendance is below where it would normally be at this time of year. You told us about the steps that you are taking in this area. For example, you informed us that staff contact families regularly to support and encourage more pupils to attend school.
- Pupils and students have returned to their full timetable of subjects. You explained to us how you have adapted the curriculum in some subjects, such as design and technology. You aim for all pupils to return to the full curriculum content by the summer term 2021.
- In Years 7, 8 and 9, you have changed the order in which the curriculum is delivered across all subjects. For example, you explained to us how teachers have made changes to the topics they deliver at the beginning of the year. You informed us that this is to avoid pupils feeling anxious about earlier content that they may have missed.
- In Years 10, 11, 12 and 13, pupils and students have continued to study all of their examination subjects. For these year groups, you have prioritised the use of specialist resources and equipment in subjects with a practical element, such as science.
- You informed us that, across all subjects, teachers are checking on pupils' new starting points during lessons. You have prioritised assessments in English and mathematics for pupils in Year 7. You explained to us how these assessments will help you identify what pupils have forgotten during the

period when schools were only open to some pupils due to COVID-19 restrictions.

- You have plans in place to deliver the curriculum remotely if required. You told us that the resources to deliver remote learning align with the school's normal curriculum. You are using a combination of digital and paper-based resources to educate a small number of pupils remotely.

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

Yours sincerely

Emma Gregory
Her Majesty's Inspector