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12 November 2020

Robert Major  
Tomlinscote School  
Tomlinscote Way  
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Surrey  
GU16 8PY

Dear Mr Major

### **Ofsted visit to Tomlinscote School**

Following my visit with Lucy English, 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 to you, the vice principal, members of the senior leadership team and representatives from The Prospect Trust. We did not speak to pupils, teaching staff or parents because of the social distancing 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 to Year 7 pupils on 2 September 2020 and then to all pupils on 3 September. All year groups are attending full time.
- You report that pupils have been motivated and enthusiastic about returning to school and that punctuality has improved. However, pupils' attendance this term is slightly below what it was at this point last year. This is due to a small number of pupils who have needed to self-isolate and because absence due to seasonal colds is higher than usual.
- Pupils in Years 10 and 11 have returned to study all of their examination courses. No pupils have dropped any subjects as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- For pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9, one lesson a week of computing has been replaced with an additional lesson of personal, social and health education (PSHE). Across all years, teachers made temporary adjustments to how some aspects of subjects are taught, for example the practical work in design technology and art.
- Across all subjects, teachers have checked pupils' knowledge to see what they can remember. Staff are using this information to adjust their teaching to help fill any gaps in this knowledge. You have plans in place for providing additional support for any pupils who need it.
- Social distancing restrictions have limited the extra-curricular provision this term, but leaders are keen to reinstate as much as is possible. Leaders have introduced alternative ways to support pupils' personal development, for example offering online work experience opportunities and adapting how they offer the Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Expedition.

- The school has an established system for providing remote education. Teachers use this to offer learning in all subjects for any pupils who are self-isolating at home. Should it be required in the future, leaders are confident that the whole curriculum can be delivered remotely for all year groups.

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

Yours sincerely

Matthew Newberry  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**