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Abbie Pearce-Dyke
Acting Principal
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Dear Miss Pearce-Dyke

Ofsted visit to Hatfield Academy

Following my visit with Jo Sharpe, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 15 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 and the assistant principal with responsibility for inclusion. We also spoke to leaders for the curriculum, the education welfare officer and the designated safeguarding lead. 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 on 3 September 2020, with Reception classes attending on partial timetables initially. All pupils were expected to attend full time from 21 September 2020.
- Attendance for the beginning of this academic year is slightly lower than the same period last year. Leaders have explained their new routines and procedures to parents to encourage pupils to attend school.
- Pupils are studying their usual range of subjects. Leaders have moved some curriculum content to ensure that pupils are taught essential new topics. In addition, more time has been made available for the teaching of mathematics and literacy. Personal, social, health and economic education has been prioritised across the school to help pupils return after the COVID-19 restrictions.
- In Reception and Year 1, leaders have identified gaps in phonics. The teaching of phonics has therefore been prioritised in these year groups. To address gaps identified in Year 6, leaders are offering a wider range of books to pupils and want to focus on helping pupils to write at length. Across the school, there is a greater focus on the teaching of vocabulary because of gaps identified since pupils returned in September 2020.
- In mathematics, teachers are assessing pupils in all year groups informally. Leaders told us that spending less time on more formal assessments is enabling teachers to fill pupils' knowledge gaps during lesson time.

- In the wider curriculum, leaders have created more time for physical education (PE) by having pupils arrive at school in their PE kit.
- Leaders have plans to deliver the curriculum remotely to whole classes or smaller groups of pupils should the school be affected by COVID-19 restrictions again.

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 chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer of the Astrea multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Sheffield. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Matthew Vellensworth
Her Majesty's Inspector