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Sue Raven
Principal
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Dear Mrs Raven

Ofsted visit to The Centre School

Following my visit with Fiona Webb, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on Tuesday 20 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 other leaders, including the senior leader responsible for safeguarding pupils. 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 to all pupils on 8 September 2020, after a phased return. Students in Years 12 and 13 attended from 4 September 2020 and pupils in Years 10 and 11 returned from 7 September 2020. You expect all pupils to attend full time. You are delighted that pupils seem pleased to return to school.
- Since opening, pupils' attendance is below that normally expected for this time of year. You are communicating with families in order to reassure them about the school's COVID-19 safety arrangements.
- All pupils are studying their usual range of subjects. Some activities, such as swimming and work experience, are not available at present. This is because these activities are taught at neighbouring provisions.
- During the first week of term, teachers focused on the personal, social, health and education curriculum, to support pupils' social, emotional and mental health needs as a result of COVID-19.
- Teachers have checked pupils' current knowledge and skills in different subjects through discussions and quizzes. Teachers are making sure that lessons focus on what learning has lapsed. You are proposing to use the additional COVID-19 funding to provide opportunities to bridge some of the gaps.
- In Years 7, 8 and 9, your staff are focusing on developing pupils' reading skills.

- Pupils in Years 10 and 11 are studying all of the subjects they chose for GCSE, the BTEC National Diploma and other qualifications. Students in Years 12 and 13 are studying all of the courses they chose.
- You plan to develop remote learning so that it is adapted to meet the needs of pupils within your school.

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

Yours sincerely

Stefanie Lipinski-Barltrop
Her Majesty's Inspector