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Alison Emmerson
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Emmerson

Ofsted remote visit to Marden Vale C of E Academy

Following my remote visit with Kathy Maddocks, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 5 November 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. Following changes to government guidance and the imposition of COVID-19 (coronavirus) lockdown restrictions, we made this visit remotely to reduce pressure on the school.

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 deputy headteacher, the deputy designated lead for safeguarding, the director of education, the parent support worker and the pastoral lead. We did not speak to pupils.

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 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 3 September 2020. There are some pupils on part-time timetables, due to medical reasons.
- Attendance is in line with the normal rate of attendance for this time of year.
- All pupils are studying their usual range of subjects. You have made adaptations to the teaching of music.
- Leaders have checked pupils' starting points in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders have identified reading as a priority.
- You have increased the amount of time given to the teaching of reading and phonics. There are two new libraries in school which pupils attend weekly. Pupils can take books home.
- In mathematics, in Years 3 and 4, you are focusing on times tables. In Years 1 and 2, number work is a priority. Teachers are using mathematical language to help pupils explain their learning.
- Personal, social, health and economic education has been given a higher profile since the start of term.
- Remote education is planned in English and mathematics. You say that it is aligned to the school's curriculum. Leaders provide a combination of online learning and work packs.

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 chief executive officer of the diocese of Salisbury multi-academy trust, the director of education for the diocese of Salisbury, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Wiltshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Heather Barraclough
Her Majesty's Inspector