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18 November 2020

Ryan Laker  
Headteacher  
Oakwood Primary Academy  
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East Sussex  
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Dear Mr Laker

### **Ofsted visit to Oakwood Primary Academy**

Following my visit with Julie Sackett, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 3 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.

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 executive headteacher, the chief executive officer of the trust, the chair of the interim executive board, the trust safeguarding lead, the senior leader responsible for safeguarding and the pastoral lead at the school. 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 Years 1 to 6 on 7 September 2020 on a full-time basis. Reception children started on the same date but on a phased basis for the first three weeks. These arrangements are normal practice for the school.
- Attendance of pupils since the beginning of term is in line with the same period last year.
- Pupils are currently taught the usual range of subjects, but some aspects of the content have been adapted. Leaders have also decided to change how some subjects are delivered for the time being. For instance, they have suspended trips to places of interest as well as speakers visiting the school. Leaders hope that the normal curriculum delivery can be restored by summer 2021.
- At the start of this term, teachers checked what pupils have remembered from their previous learning in English and mathematics.
- Teachers have learned from these checks that pupils generally, but especially younger pupils, need additional help to bring their reading skills up to where teachers would expect them to be at this stage. Leaders have put in place a range of teaching support to help pupils make this progress.
- In mathematics, pupils have largely retained their learning from last year. Teachers have therefore not needed to adapt the curriculum to help pupils catch up.

- In terms of the wider curriculum across the school, teachers will check what gaps in knowledge there might be as they teach each topic and address them as they go.
- Leaders and teachers are ready to deliver the planned curriculum remotely should the need arise in the future. They have decided to ensure that paper packs will be available for all pupils as well as providing resources in digital form.

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 interim executive board, the chief executive officer of the Aurora multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for East Sussex. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Yasmin Maskatiya  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**