

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



18 November 2020

Marie Taylor  
Headteacher  
St Columb Major Academy  
Newquay Road  
St Columb  
Cornwall  
TR9 6RW

Dear Mrs Taylor

### **Ofsted remote visit to St Columb Major Academy**

Following my remote visit with Matt Middlemore, 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 and members of your leadership team, including the deputy leader responsible for safeguarding. 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:**

- You opened the school to all pupils on 7 September 2020. Children joining the Reception class attended part time for the first week of the term.
- Pupils' rates of attendance are above those seen at this time last year.
- You introduced a well-being curriculum to help pupils settle back into school. Pupils are studying the full range of subjects but with some changes to the music, foreign language and physical education (PE) curriculum.
- Teachers have checked pupils' understanding of mathematics. You found that some pupils' understanding of number is not where you would like it to be. You have provided additional support to help pupils to get back on track.
- Leaders have given reading a high priority. Teachers found that some pupils have forgotten some sounds and how to use them in their reading. You are making sure that pupils who have gaps in their reading skills receive extra support to catch up.
- Your checks on pupils' knowledge in all subjects other than English and mathematics will be completed by the end of the term. You will use this information to adjust your curriculum.
- Children in Reception are following the early years curriculum. Teachers are prioritising children's literacy, communication and language development.

- You have arrangements in place for remote learning. You feel that staff will need additional training, should there be a need for remote learning in the future.

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 Kernow Learning multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Cornwall. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Sue Costello  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**