

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231  
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19 November 2020

Steve Bowhay  
Headteacher  
Park Vale Academy  
Top Valley Drive  
Top Valley  
Nottingham  
Nottinghamshire  
NG5 9AZ

Dear Mr Bowhay

### **Ofsted remote visit to Park Vale Academy**

Following my remote visit with John Lawson, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 10 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 senior leaders, including those 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:**

- Since the start of term, a small number of pupils have had to work from home for a short period of time. A group of Year 11 pupils were isolating at the time of the remote visit.
- The curriculum in Years 7 to 9 includes the school's usual range of subjects.
- In Years 10 and 11, all pupils are studying their chosen GCSE and other examination courses.
- Teachers have modified the curriculum plans so that pupils can review important content or catch up on missed learning. In some subjects, teachers have adapted activities when specialist rooms or equipment are not available. Leaders have plans to return to the normal curriculum in all subjects no later than summer 2021.
- Teachers are checking what pupils know and remember in each subject. They have used formal tests in mathematics to identify pupils' new starting points. In English, teachers' checks have shown that some Year 7 pupils need support with their writing, including their spelling and grammar.

- Extra staff are helping some pupils to catch up during their English and mathematics lessons. Leaders have arranged for some Year 11 pupils to receive after-school tutoring.
- Some extra-curricular and enrichment activities have restarted, including Year 7 breakfast club and film club. Leaders are planning virtual careers presentations for Year 11 pupils. Sports and dance activities have not resumed.
- When individual pupils are absent from school, teachers provide them with work through the school's website. This work is similar to the curriculum being taught in school. Leaders have checked that all pupils can access this learning, either online or using paper copies of the work.
- Some teachers deliver lessons remotely when required. Leaders are helping teachers to develop their use of technology. For example, they provide opportunities for teachers to share their practice with each other.

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

Yours sincerely

Rachel Tordoff  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**