

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Matthew Smith
Director of Education
Wesc Foundation School
Topsham Road
Countess Wear
Exeter
Devon
EX2 6HA

Dear Mr Smith

Ofsted visit to Wesc Foundation School

Following my visit with Sarah McGinnis, 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, and leaders responsible for safeguarding and the curriculum. 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:

- You opened the school to all pupils on 8 September 2020. Pupils are expected to attend full time.
- Since September, pupils' attendance has been above that at the same time last year.
- Pupils are studying your full curriculum. You utilised the opportunities offered by lockdown to accelerate the implementation of changes to the school's curriculum. For example, teachers, therapists and carers now plan learning aligned across all subjects within the national curriculum.
- Following pupils' return in September, you assessed all pupils against the expectations of your new curriculum. You have found that pupils have not lost ground during lockdown. Nevertheless, you have prioritised communication and language, as well as the use of technology, because you believe these are central to pupils accessing the rest of the curriculum.
- Your new curriculum means that pupils in Years 7 to 9 are now learning a broader range of subjects. For example, pupils are now learning through art, music and the humanities. You have prioritised pupils' well-being and personal, social and health education. You have identified that this has helped pupils cope with changes to routine caused by the pandemic.
- In Years 10 and 11, you have ensured that some pupils continue to access entry-level qualifications as normal. You have also prioritised amending how pupils gain work experience in light of the challenges of the pandemic.

- You will continue to use live streaming to deliver remote learning if needed in the future. You believe a blended approach would be best for your pupils. This is because it would allow remote learners to access lessons alongside their peers.

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 Wesc Foundation, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Devon. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Matthew Barnes
Her Majesty's Inspector