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Catherine Biddick
Head of School
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Dear Miss Biddick

Ofsted remote visit to Mount Hawke Academy

Following my remote visit with Jennifer Gibbs, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 12 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 your senior leaders. 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:

- No class or year-group 'bubbles' have had to isolate this term. A few pupils are working from home as they are self-isolating.
- Pupils are studying their usual range of subjects. Leaders' plans show that pupils will have covered the content they should have by summer term 2021. In the short term, you have made adjustments to the order in which you teach some of the content, for example in music and science.
- Teachers have used their assessments of pupils' learning to prioritise particular aspects of the curriculum. These include a focus on pupils' writing, addition, subtraction and times tables in mathematics, and pupils' personal and social development. Leaders have introduced a new programme for personal, social and health education.
- Leaders are prioritising reading. Teachers have noticed that younger pupils are not as sure of their phonics knowledge as they were. In Years 1 and 2, pupils now have two sessions of phonics teaching each day. You are using some of your COVID-19 catch-up funding to buy new books, matched to pupils' phonic knowledge, to allow pupils to continue to read regularly at home.
- In mathematics, teachers are concentrating on pupils' understanding of place value and basic calculations. Teachers are giving pupils additional time during the day to practise their number bonds and times tables.

- Leaders have plans in place for pupils who need to work from home. They are using online systems to provide resources that cover the same content as is being taught in class.

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 Aspire Academy 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

Iain Freeland
Her Majesty's Inspector