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25 November 2020

James Wilson  
Principal  
Bacon's College  
Timber Pond Road  
London  
SE16 6AT

Dear Mr Wilson

### **Ofsted visit to Bacon's College**

Following my visit with Lisa Strong, 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 the senior leadership team, including the senior 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 (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:**

- Pupils in Years 7 and 12 returned to school on 4 September 2020. The school then opened to all pupils on 7 September 2020. All pupils are expected to attend full time.
- Attendance is broadly in line with attendance for this time of year.
- The school continues to offer the full range of national curriculum subjects in all year groups, and most pupils follow the full curriculum including all practical subjects. Leaders have reviewed their curriculum plans and made some adjustments to the order of the content. For example, in Year 11 English, teachers have brought forward the poetry unit to the start of term in order to help pupils to recall what they have previously learned. Leaders are confident that curriculum plans will be back on schedule by, if not before, summer term 2021.
- In Years 7 to 9, teachers regularly check what pupils have learned and remember. They use the information to modify their planning where necessary to help pupils catch up on the learning they have lost.
- Following teachers' assessments, a small number of pupils in Years 10 and 11 have reduced their GCSE option subjects by one. The time gained from this has been allocated to additional time to study English, mathematics and science in order to help them catch up. All pupils in Year 11 now have an extended school day from Monday to Thursday, and the extra time is used to provide further teaching in English, mathematics and science.
- The sixth-form curriculum remains broad and students have been able to choose from a range of A-level and vocational courses. Students in Year 12

received transition teaching in the summer term of Year 11 to help them prepare for their Year 12 courses.

- Leaders have plans in place to deliver the full curriculum remotely, should there be a need in the future. An online system for providing remote learning is already being used when individual pupils or pupils in year-group 'bubbles' need to isolate and learn from home. Leaders have provided families with digital devices and internet connection where necessary.

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

Yours sincerely

Mark Smith  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**