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Philip Shackleton
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Shackleton

Ofsted remote visit to Oldbury Academy

Following my remote visit with Lesley Yates, 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, the senior leadership team and 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 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:

- At the time of the visit, Year 7, Year 10 and a Year 8 'bubble' were isolating at home. Approximately three quarters of pupils have had to work from home at some point since the start of term.
- All pupils are studying their usual range of subjects. Leaders have adjusted their curriculum plans to ensure pupils cover key knowledge in each subject. In mathematics, leaders have reordered the Year 7 curriculum. You told us that teachers have started this term by spending more time on topics that pupils would normally have covered in Year 6.
- Teachers are using assessment in lessons to check what pupils can remember. In English, for example, you have identified that pupils have gaps in their writing and inference skills. Teachers are using lesson time to show pupils how they can improve.
- Leaders have used information from the summer term to identify Year 11 pupils who have fallen furthest behind. You have started a tuition programme where some pupils receive one-to-one support in English, mathematics and science.
- You are providing remote education for those pupils who are isolating at home. Teachers deliver live lessons online or provide paper packs to those

pupils who request it. You have a timetable in place that closely mirrors your current curriculum.

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 you, the chair of the board of trustees, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Sandwell. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Mark Howes
Her Majesty's Inspector