

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Louisa Sanghera
Head of School
Ranikhet Academy
Spey Road
Tilehurst
Reading
Berkshire
RG30 4ED

Dear Miss Sanghera

Ofsted remote visit to Ranikhet Academy

Following my remote visit with Louise Walker, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 17 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 executive headteacher and other 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:

- You have not had to send home any 'bubbles' of pupils. A very small number of pupils have had to self-isolate during this term.
- All pupils are studying their usual range of subjects. Teachers are prioritising developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education, to support pupils' understanding of what is happening in the world. For example, teachers chose new class reading books that highlighted the theme of belonging, to help pupils' social development as they returned to school in September.
- Teachers have checked what pupils can and cannot remember in English and mathematics, using a range of tests and teacher assessments. In the wider curriculum, teachers are checking what pupils know before they teach new content. They plan to adjust what they teach to fill any gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills. You hope to be able to return to your normal curriculum by the summer term.
- In mathematics, teachers have found that they need to spend extra time helping pupils to understand place value and develop problem solving and calculation skills. Some pupils are getting extra support, at the start of the day, to help them to catch up.

- In English, you have uncovered gaps in phonics, spelling and writing. Teachers have reorganised the groups that pupils are in when learning phonics, to make sure that pupils are taught the sounds they need most help with. This term, teachers have also extended the time spent on each English topic. This is to provide extra opportunities for pupils to practise writing accurately and learn the spellings they missed from last year.
- In the Nursery and Reception classes, teachers have found that children's starting points are lower than usual. Teachers are prioritising developing pupils' communication skills and their understanding of number.
- You are providing digital and paper-based resources for pupils to access when they are not in school. Work is aligned to what pupils would normally be learning in school. You plan to include live, online sessions at the start and end of each day if any whole-class bubbles need to work at home.

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 governing body, chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer of the REAch2 multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Reading. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Catherine Old
Her Majesty's Inspector