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Douglas Thomas
Headteacher
Chalkhill Education Centre
Chalkhill
Princess Royal Hospital Site
Lewes Road
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West Sussex
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Dear Mr Thomas

Ofsted remote visit to Chalkhill Education Centre

Following my remote visit with Alice Roberts, 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 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:

- To date, no pupils have been absent from school because of COVID-19. If pupils require remote education in the future, leaders have plans to give pupils paper-based learning packs which they can use for independent study. Where possible, these resources will match what the pupil would have been taught in school.
- For the majority of pupils, teachers have carried out checks on pupils' English, mathematics, science and some of the other subjects they are studying. These are the same checks that teachers always carry out as soon as possible when pupils join the school. These checks help the teachers to make sure pupils' learning is at the right level for them. Pupils are studying their full range of subjects.
- Pupils are being taught in groups of mixed ages, which is different to usual. This is to ensure that pupils stay safely within their 'bubbles' in school. This is not affecting what pupils learn.
- Pupils are currently not able to access the local community for part of their independent living skills or volunteering and enrichment sessions. Leaders are planning for all pupils to be able to return to full experiential learning as soon as it is physically safe to do so.

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

Yours sincerely

Maxine McDonald-Taylor
Her Majesty's Inspector