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Mounir Meghalsi
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Dear Mr Meghalsi

Ofsted remote visit to Calthorpe Teaching Academy

Following my remote visit with Heather Simpson, 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 in your capacity as acting headteacher and senior leader for safeguarding, members of the senior leadership team, the attendance officer and the chief executive officer (CEO) and deputy CEO of the Thrive Education Partnership. 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 remote visit, one class from key stage 3 was self-isolating. Since the beginning of term, just over one quarter of pupils have had to self-isolate at home due to COVID-19.
- Pupils are studying their usual range of curriculum subjects. You are putting more emphasis on 'learning to learn' as part of your recovery curriculum, helping pupils re-establish routines and expectations for learning. You anticipate that you will have returned to your usual curriculum before summer 2021.
- Since September, you have checked pupils' starting points to see where they may need additional support to help them recover skills they may have lost or learning they may have forgotten. You have noticed that the pupils who have difficulties with social interaction have been the most affected. You are confident that the additional support pupils are receiving is making a difference. Some pupils are also receiving additional physiotherapy support.
- All pupils are following individual pathways for learning, but you are putting more emphasis on communication, literacy and numeracy. For the youngest children, you are providing additional time for play and physical development. You are also focusing on supporting pupils' physical and mental health and

well-being. You have reordered some of the curriculum content in personal, social and health education for older pupils, focusing on developing their independence. You have adapted your preparation for work and work experience because pupils are not able to go out into the local community.

- Once a pupil has been absent for five days, either because they have to self-isolate or because they have other medical needs, you provide them with remote education. You provide personalised paper-packs of learning as well as links to online materials. Teachers contact families to guide them through the tasks. You know that the complexity of pupils' needs means that it is difficult to replicate pupils' experience at school in the home environment. At the moment, not all pupils who are expected to engage in remote learning are doing so, so you are working with families to improve this.

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, the chief executive officer of the Thrive Education Partnership, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Birmingham. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Deb Jenkins
Her Majesty's Inspector