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27 November 2020

Ruth Craven  
Principal  
Copley Academy  
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Cheshire  
SK15 3RR

Dear Mrs Craven

### **Ofsted remote visit to Copley Academy**

Following my remote visit with David Selby, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 11 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; members of your senior leadership team, one of whom is also the designated safeguarding lead; and the special educational needs coordinator. 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 told us that almost all pupils have had to work from home at least once since the start of the autumn term.
- Pupils in Years 7 to 11 are studying their usual range of subjects. However, you told us that teachers have made some adjustments to the order in which they teach the content of the curriculum. You intend that pupils in all year groups will resume their usual curriculum content by Summer 2021.
- You explained that teachers have already checked what pupils know and can remember of the learning they have done since March 2020. Teachers plan to do further checks as pupils catch up with their learning. Year 11 pupils have completed 'mock' examinations earlier than usual, to give teachers information about these pupils' new starting points.
- In Years 7 to 9, you said that pupils have full access to specialist classrooms and resources, for example science laboratories. You explained that pupils can access an increasing range of extra-curricular activities, such as sporting activities and virtual careers talks.
- In Years 10 and 11, pupils continue to follow their usual examination courses. Pupils have access to an extra lesson at the end of each day. This is to help them to focus on the subjects that they need most support with, and to compensate for any learning lost since March 2020.
- You have developed remote education in the school. You told us that you are training pupils and staff in how to use remote education effectively. You have

carried out pupil and parent surveys to improve the quality of remote education.

- You said that pupils in Years 7 to 11 who must self-isolate follow the same timetable as their peers in school. The planned activities broadly reflect what is being taught in the school.

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 chair of the board of trustees, the chief executive officer of the Great Academies Education Trust (GAET), the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Tameside. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Alyson Middlemass  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**