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Sally-Anne Bloom
Acting Principal
Whitley Academy
Abbey Road
Whitley
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West Midlands
CV3 4BD

Dear Miss Bloom,

Ofsted remote visit to Whitley Academy

Following my remote visit with Wayne Simner, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 26 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 vice-principal, curriculum leaders and other staff. 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:

- Since returning to school in September 2020, just below three quarters of your pupils have spent some time learning at home. All pupils in Years 11 to 13 were studying at home at the time of the visit.
- All pupils are studying their usual range of subjects, but curriculum leaders told us that they have changed the order in which some subject content is taught. This is to cover content that was missed during the spring and summer terms 2020, when the school was not open to all pupils. For example, in physical education, pupils started the autumn term by taking part in athletics, which they would normally have learned in the summer term. You plan to return to your usual curriculum by the summer term 2021.
- You told us that teachers are making checks in lessons to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge. They are using the information from these checks to identify areas where pupils need further support. In addition, teachers are providing extra lessons at the end of the school day for all pupils in Years 10 and 11.
- You and your team have introduced a way for pupils to access learning at home. As part of your approach, most pupils complete work online. You explained that teachers have taught pupils how to use this system.
- Pupils who are isolating as part of a year-group 'bubble' are expected to access live daily lessons in English, mathematics and science. Individual pupils

who are isolating complete work linked to the lessons they are missing. You told us that you match remote education with the school's curriculum as closely as possible.

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 interim executive board, the regional school's commissioner and the director of children's services for Coventry. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Stevens
Her Majesty's Inspector