

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Michelle Wilman
Executive Principal
West Specialist Inclusive Learning Centre
4 Town Street
Stanningley
Pudsey
West Yorkshire
LS28 6HL

Dear Ms Wilman

Ofsted remote visit to West Specialist Inclusive Learning Centre

Following my remote visit with Patricia Head, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 10 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 head of school, two assistant headteachers (including one with responsibility for safeguarding), the behaviour and attendance lead, the parent support worker, the leader of the complex and multiple learning needs pathway, and the west area inclusion partnership project director. 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:

- The school operates in different sites across the city. Since the beginning of term, six pupil 'bubbles' have needed to isolate. This equates to approximately a quarter of the pupils on roll.
- Pupils are studying their usual range of subjects. This includes students in the sixth form. They can access therapies, including hydrotherapy and rebound therapy. Children in early years and those with the most complex needs are following their usual curriculum.
- You have altered some activities for older pupils and students in the sixth form as a result of COVID-19. For example, students are now covering work-related learning through gardening or art for the local area. Some aspects of community safety, for example travel training, are not being covered at the moment.
- Each pupil has had a new baseline assessment in September 2020. You told us that members of staff have identified key skills and knowledge that each pupil needs to focus on.

- You have identified physical development as a particular area that now needs focus for several pupils, including those with specific physical needs.
- You told us that some pupils with autism spectrum disorder and those with communication difficulties have fallen behind in their development. Staff are focusing on these specific areas for these pupils.
- When pupils are not at school because they are isolating you provide them with a range of activities, depending upon their individual needs. This includes paper-based resources, online learning, live teaching and live streaming of events such as assemblies. You also provide parents with specialist equipment to help them work with their children where this is 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 governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Leeds. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Michael Wardle
Her Majesty's Inspector