

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Karen Begley
Head of School
Carisbrooke College
Mountbatten Drive
Newport
Isle of Wight
PO30 5QU

Dear Miss Begley

Ofsted remote visit to Carisbrooke College

Following my remote visit with Catherine Old, 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, members of the senior leadership team and the senior leader responsible for safeguarding. 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:

- A very small proportion of pupils have needed to self-isolate and work from home since the start of term.
- Pupils are studying the school's normal range of subjects. Teachers adapt what is taught to fit in with health and safety measures put in place by the school. For example, in music, pupils are using keyboards rather than stringed instruments. In science, teachers demonstrate practical experiments because not all pupils can currently access laboratories. Leaders hope to return to teaching the curriculum in the usual way by the summer term 2021, if not sooner.
- Teachers are using a variety of assessments to find out what pupils know and can remember from the autumn and spring terms of last year. This includes setting quizzes at the start of each lesson to identify any gaps in knowledge.
- Leaders are focusing on developing pupils' reading skills in Years 7, 8 and 9. Staff across a range of subjects are using different strategies to help pupils read more accurately to gain a greater understanding of texts. Extra support is being delivered through the school's tutor-time programme.
- Pupils in Years 10 and 11 are continuing to study all their examination subjects. Teachers have reorganised some of the topics in case of any future disruption because of COVID-19. For example, in English, the study of 'Macbeth' was moved to the start of the academic year, to ensure that all pupils had face-to-face teaching to support their understanding of the play.

- Currently, teachers are providing the small number of pupils who are self-isolating with daily resources for them to study at home. Most resources are digital, and cover what the rest of the pupils in the class are learning. Leaders have a plan in place to deliver subjects remotely for all year groups, should it be needed. This includes weekly online live lessons.

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 co-chairs of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for the Isle of Wight. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Aimee Floyd
Her Majesty's Inspector