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David Thomas
Acting Principal
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Dear Mr Thomas

Ofsted remote visit to Unified Academy

Following my remote visit with Yasmin Maskatiya, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 5 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 executive principal, deputy principal, assistant principals, home school link worker, special educational needs coordinator and designated safeguarding lead. 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 opened to all pupils on 14 September 2020. All year groups attend on a full-time basis. A small number of pupils are on part-time timetables due to their individual needs and circumstances.
- Pupils' attendance is lower than usual for this time of year. Leaders are encouraging pupils to attend regularly. They are maintaining regular contact with parents, providing support and reassurance where needed.
- Pupils are studying the school's usual range of subjects. However, leaders have adapted some aspects of the curriculum. For example, the school's plans to use local sports facilities have been postponed for the time being. Leaders intend to re-establish curriculum delivery in the usual way in the future.
- Teachers have assessed pupils' starting points in English and reading. They know that pupils need extra help with aspects of reading, such as phonics and comprehension skills. Leaders are using a range of strategies to support pupils' reading and to promote enjoyment of books.
- Teachers checked what pupils remember from previous learning in mathematics at the start of the autumn term. Pupils are finding some aspects of mathematics, such as number bonds and times tables, more difficult than

before the lockdown. Teachers are revisiting mathematics facts and skills regularly during lessons.

- Leaders are making ongoing adjustments to the teaching of different subjects in the wider curriculum in response to pupils' needs.
- Leaders have made few changes to key stage 3 courses. However, some practical aspects of the usual curriculum are not taking place for now.
- Pupils in key stage 4 are continuing with their studies for qualifications, such as GCSEs and functional skills, as planned. However, some activities, such as work experience and practical aspects of vocational studies, are not taking place for now.
- Leaders intend to provide remote learning through a combination of home learning packs and digital resources should the need arise.

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, and the chief executive officer of the Orchard Hill College Academy Trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Surrey. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Julie Sackett
Her Majesty's Inspector