

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



10 December 2020

Ben Bartlett
Executive Headteacher
Hinchley Wood School
Claygate Lane
Hinchley Wood
Esher
Surrey
KT10 0AQ

Dear Mr Bartlett

Ofsted remote visit to Hinchley Wood School

Following my remote visit with Shazia Akram, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 17 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, subject leaders, pastoral leaders and the attendance officer. 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:

- At the time of the visit, a group of 57 Year 9 pupils was self-isolating and learning remotely from home. Since the start of the term, only a very small proportion of pupils have had to learn remotely from home for a limited time.
- Pupils in Years 7 to 11 and students in the sixth form are studying their usual subjects. This includes option subjects for pupils in Years 10 and 11 and sixth-form A-level subjects. In some subjects, leaders have changed the order of topics to follow on from what was covered during COVID-19 restrictions.
- Leaders continue to set all year groups routine assessments, and carry out checks on pupils' knowledge and understanding in lessons. Teachers have identified that some pupils need to build up confidence in recalling what they have learned and applying what they remember to new topics and ideas. In all year groups, including the sixth form, leaders have planned in opportunities for pupils to re-visit specific learning throughout the year, alongside new topics.
- Leaders have noted that pupils in all year groups need practice in using specialist vocabulary when describing their ideas, justifying answers to questions and explaining processes.

- For individuals and groups of pupils self-isolating at home, leaders have set up a system of online lessons that reflect what would be taught if pupils were in school. Pupils who have to learn remotely from home can follow their usual timetable for the day, including completing lessons in practical subjects such as drama, design and technology, and art. Pupils are able to upload their work and get feedback from teachers.

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 Surrey. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Janet Pearce
Her Majesty's Inspector