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18 December 2020

Maura Favell  
Headteacher  
The Polesworth School  
Dordon Road  
Tamworth  
Staffordshire  
B78 1QT

Dear Mrs Favell

### **Ofsted remote visit to The Polesworth School**

Following my remote visit with Wayne Simner, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 1 December 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, the senior leader responsible for safeguarding 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:**

- All your pupils have spent some time learning at home since returning to school in September. At the time of the visit, all pupils in the Year 11 'bubble' and some pupils in Years 8 and 12 were isolating at home.
- Pupils in all year groups are studying their usual range of subjects. Leaders told us that they have made some adaptations to the curriculum. For example, in Years 7 to 11, curriculum leaders have changed the order in which some subject content is taught. They have made these changes to cover important content that was missed during the period when schools were only open to some pupils due to COVID-19 restrictions.
- Since September, teachers have checked what pupils know and understand using a combination of tests and activities in lessons. Teachers are using information from these checks to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge. Some pupils are receiving extra support to help them catch up.
- You told us that you match remote education with the school's curriculum as closely as possible. Pupils who are isolating at home are expected to access pre-recorded and live lessons on an online platform. Teachers have taught pupils how to use this platform. Pupils are provided with packs of work instead, if they or their parents request this. You told us that you and your team are continuing to develop remote learning, with an increased emphasis on live teaching.

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, the chief executive officer of the Community Academies Trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Warwickshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Stevens  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**