

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Cindy Pritchard
Headteacher
Allenbourn Middle School
East Borough
Wimborne
Dorset
BH21 1PL

Dear Ms Pritchard

Ofsted remote visit to Allenbourn Middle School

Following my remote visit with Heather Barraclough, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 24 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 multi-academy trust director for school improvement, the senior leadership team, the special educational needs coordinator and the subject lead for history. 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:

- Approximately three in 20 pupils have had to study from home since the start of term.
- All pupils are studying their usual range of subjects.
- Leaders have checked pupils' new starting points. You are adapting the curriculum to accommodate any gaps identified in pupils' knowledge.
- Reading remains a priority. You have introduced an extra 20 minutes of reading at the start of the school day. In writing, you have focused on handwriting and presentation skills and, in Year 7, pupils' use of semicolons and colons.
- In mathematics, pupils in Years 5 and 6 are revising place value and arithmetic. In years 7 and 8, you are focusing on pupils' application of mathematical knowledge.
- Personal, social, health and economic education has a high profile. You say that this is in place to support pupils' mental health and well-being.
- You have planned a package of remote learning. Pupils' learning at home follows their daily timetable. As well as learning in the academic subjects, you have included assemblies. A barrier to remote education is the lack of practical resources that pupils have at home.

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 Wimborne Academy Trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Dorset. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Kathy Maddocks
Her Majesty's Inspector