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14 December 2020

Dean Watkin  
Headteacher  
Newsome High School  
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Dear Mr Watkin

### **Ofsted remote visit to Newsome High School**

Following my remote visit with Debbie Redshaw, 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 chair of governors, two deputy headteachers, the curriculum leaders for mathematics, English, history and physical education, two deputy safeguarding leaders and the leader of human resources. 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:**

- Leaders have not closed any 'bubbles' because of COVID-19 restrictions. However, around a third of pupils have learned remotely from home since September.
- Pupils are studying their usual range of subjects. Leaders have made some changes in those subjects where pupils normally share equipment and resources. For example, in science, rather than conduct experiments themselves, pupils now watch videos of the experiments.
- In Year 11, leaders are using the information gathered from formal and in-class assessments to support pupils in a range of subjects. For example, in mathematics, your checks have shown that pupils could not remember some aspects of geometry and graphs, so you intend to use after-school intervention to address this.
- Your checks in Years 7 to 9 have shown that reading across a range of subjects has been affected because of COVID-19 restrictions. For example, in history, leaders have noticed that source analysis and inference skills are not

as good as usual. Therefore, you have changed the curriculum so that pupils have more chances to study historical sources in these year groups.

- Leaders have introduced an online system of remote education that closely matches the curriculum that pupils follow in school. Pupils can access remote education through paper-based resources if this is their preferred method of working. Should a whole bubble close, leaders have plans to record lessons for pupils to access remotely.

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

Yours sincerely

Matthew Vellensworth  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**