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Alison Chapman
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Dear Mrs Chapman

Ofsted visit to Baines School

Following my visit with Jonathan Smart, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 8 October 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.

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 with leaders, including: you; members of your senior leadership team, one of whom is also the designated safeguarding lead; the head of English; the head of creative arts; the special educational needs coordinator; and members of the support staff. We did not speak to pupils because of the protective measures in place.

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 (coronavirus) 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 pupils in Years 8, 9 and 10 on 3 September 2020. Pupils in Years 7 and 11 returned on 4 September 2020. All pupils are expected to attend full time.
- Attendance is slightly below the usual attendance rate for this time of year. You continue to provide additional pastoral support for pupils who are reluctant to return to school.
- You explained that you have adjusted the order in which pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 learn the content of some curriculum subjects. This is particularly the case in some practical subjects. For example, in physical education, you are prioritising pupils' fitness. You told us that this is to increase pupils' levels of physical activity following the period when schools were only open to some pupils due to COVID-19 restrictions.
- In Years 10 and 11, pupils continue to study all their examination subjects. However, in a small number of subjects, you have changed the order of when topics are taught. For example, in science, teachers have delayed teaching topics where there is a need to carry out complex practical experiments.
- You intend to carry out formal assessments later in the term. Your teachers are identifying gaps in pupils' knowledge during lesson time. Across the school, you have identified that some pupils are less confident in verbalising key ideas and concepts in some curriculum subjects. You attribute this to less

discussion and debate between pupils and their teachers during the period when schools were only open to some pupils due to COVID-19 restrictions.

- You have developed a range of systems to monitor and evaluate remote learning. You told us that teachers are finding imaginative ways to engage pupils in their online learning. You continue to ensure that remote learning is closely linked to the school's curriculum.

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

Yours sincerely

Alyson Middlemass
Her Majesty's Inspector