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15 October 2020

Kirstie Jones  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Jones

### **Ofsted visit to Cedar Children's Academy**

Following my visit with Clive Dunn, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 29 September 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 to you, the acting deputy headteacher and school and trust leaders responsible for attendance and safeguarding. 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:**

- You opened the school to pupils in Years 1 to 6 on 7 September 2020. Reception children started a week later on 14 September 2020. Pupils are attending full time.
- Pupils' current attendance is slightly below what the school would normally expect for this time of year. You put in place tailored arrangements to support some pupils and families with the return to school.
- All pupils are studying the full range of subjects. Teachers have made some adjustments to what pupils are studying in music, physical education (PE) and computing. This is in line with your COVID-19 risk assessment.
- You have prioritised reading across the school. Teachers have checked pupils' knowledge in phonics in Years 1 and 2. Pupils who have fallen behind are receiving extra support.
- In mathematics, teachers use quizzes at the start of lessons to check pupils' mathematical understanding and identify gaps in their knowledge. Teachers have focused on teaching aspects of the subject that you think pupils need to be secure in before moving on. All year groups are currently focusing on place value.
- In subjects such as history, geography and science, teachers have identified the important knowledge and skills that pupils may have missed during the spring and summer terms. They are adjusting the curriculum to make sure

that this is covered in future. You anticipate that all pupils will be back on track with the school's usual curriculum by spring 2021.

- Currently, the acting deputy headteacher is setting work for pupils who are unable to attend due to self-isolation. Where possible, this reflects what the rest of the class is studying in school. You also have plans in place to deliver the curriculum remotely, should it be needed in the future. These plans include online lessons delivered by your staff.

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

Yours sincerely

Michael Green  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**