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Phil Cosby
Principal
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Dear Mr Cosby

Ofsted remote visit to Alec Reed Academy

Following my remote visit with Lucy Bruce, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 25 November, 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 and two members of your senior leadership team, including the senior leader responsible for safeguarding. 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:

- A small minority of pupils have had to work from home since the start of the term, mostly in Year 11 and the sixth form.
- Across the school, pupils are studying all the subjects that comprise the school's usual curriculum. Leaders and teachers have identified the aspects of each subject that pupils have missed learning and adapted plans for subject content accordingly.
- Leaders have prioritised reading, especially in Reception and Years 1 and 2. Teachers are spending more time helping pupils remember and apply the phonics knowledge they have previously learned. Leaders have slightly reduced the curriculum time for Spanish in Years 3 to 6 to allow more time for reading.
- From their early checks, teachers noted that many pupils in Years 1 to 6 struggled to recall important facts about number. The teaching of number fluency is currently a key priority in mathematics.
- In Years 1 to 6, leaders and teachers have started to look more closely at the 'lost learning' in subjects such as art, geography and science. Leaders have planned to address gaps in pupils' knowledge by the end of the spring term.
- Leaders have made some adjustments to the teaching and content of practical subjects. Teachers provide pupils in Years 7 and 8 with resources for practical work in science, design technology and art in the classroom, rather than in the specialist areas. In music, pupils are learning about percussion instruments rather than preparing for performances.

- In Years 9 to 11, teachers are preparing to test more formally how much of the GCSE curriculum pupils have learned. Staff plan to use their analysis of the results to shape their teaching plans for the rest of the academic year.
- In the sixth form, students are studying all their option subjects and other compulsory parts of the curriculum. Teachers have planned learning this term on the basis of their analysis of curriculum gaps in Year 11.
- Leaders have planned the curriculum for remote education, should a year-group 'bubble' need to go into isolation. It comprises a mix of pre-recorded and live lessons, following closely the school's normal programme. Providing all pupils with the technology needed to access online learning has been a challenge that leaders have gradually overcome.

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

Yours sincerely

Nasim Butt
Her Majesty's Inspector