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Neil Miller
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Dear Mr Miller

Ofsted visit to Bromley Beacon Academy

Following my visit with Daniel Constable, 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 to you, the senior leadership team, and leaders with responsibility for 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:

- The school opened fully for all pupils on 4 September 2020. Nearly all pupils are attending full time. Leaders are aware of the reasons for the absence of any pupils who have not returned to school, and are in frequent communication with their families.
- Attendance is higher than at the same time last year. All staff encourage pupils to attend regularly, for example through discussions in tutorial and mentoring sessions.
- All pupils are studying their usual range of subjects. Practical work in construction, motor mechanics, music and physical education has been amended slightly. Your aim is to ensure that the full range of practical activities resumes by summer term 2021.
- Staff checked the new starting points for all pupils in English and mathematics when the school opened fully in September. For each year group, leaders have identified the content that needs to be revisited in order for pupils to get back on track with their learning. In Years 7, 8 and 9, some pupils are receiving additional lessons to plug gaps in their reading and writing skills.
- In the primary phase, teachers found that some pupils have fallen behind in their basic arithmetic skills in mathematics, and you are targeting teaching to support them with this. You and your team are also placing emphasis on teaching phonics and reading skills because of the gaps in pupils' learning you have identified.
- In Years 10 and 11, pupils continue to study all of the subjects that they have opted to take examinations in. Based on teachers' checks on pupils' learning,

some pupils are receiving extra help to prepare them for their GCSE examinations in English and mathematics. Students in the sixth form are accessing the same range of academic and vocational qualifications as in previous years.

- Throughout all year groups, leaders and staff continue to underpin all learning with a focus on supporting pupils' mental health and well-being. You told us that the school dog, Rocco, supports the school's work on this.
- Leaders have plans in place to ensure that all pupils can learn remotely if they are unable to attend school. Pupils will be expected to study their usual 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 chair of the board of trustees, the chief executive officer of the London South East Academies Trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Bromley. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Ruth Dollner
Her Majesty's Inspector