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10 December 2020

Claire Pirrie  
Head of School  
Godmanchester Bridge Academy  
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Godmanchester  
Cambridgeshire  
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Dear Ms Pirrie

### **Ofsted remote visit to Godmanchester Bridge Academy**

Following my remote visit with Andrew Hemmings, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 19 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 assistant headteacher and the lead teacher for English. 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:**

- One year-group 'bubble' was isolating at the time of the visit. These pupils are learning at home. They are due to return to school at the beginning of December 2020.
- Pupils are studying the usual range of subjects. Teachers are checking what pupils remember on a regular basis and then adapting their plans. Leaders are aiming for pupils to study the full planned content in all subjects by the summer term 2021.
- Teachers are spending more time focusing on pupils' personal, social and emotional development. Leaders are hoping to have extra-curricular clubs and trips available later in the school year.
- In September 2020, teachers checked how well pupils were reading. They have used this information to plan lessons and provide additional support. Teachers have increased the range of books available to encourage pupils to read more frequently.
- Younger pupils are having extra teaching in phonics. Staff are teaching Year 1 pupils the sounds they missed when they were not in school during the summer term.
- Pupils are spending more time getting back into the routine of writing for longer periods. In all year groups, teachers are revisiting vocabulary, grammar

and punctuation to help pupils remember how to use these elements of language accurately in their writing.

- At the beginning of term, teachers checked what pupils had remembered in mathematics. In Years 3 and 4, pupils are revisiting place value and number knowledge to help them solve number problems accurately.
- Reception children are being given more opportunities to play and talk with each other. Leaders said that children's language and communication skills were not where they would usually expect them to be.
- Leaders have planned both online and paper-based learning for self-isolating pupils. This is similar to the learning pupils would usually have in school.

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 of the Aces multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Cambridgeshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Maureen Su  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**