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Clare Neuberger
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Dear Mrs Neuberger

Ofsted visit to Yesodey Hatorah Senior Girls School

Following my visit with Nasim Butt, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 3 December 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 and the Menacheles. You are the two senior leaders responsible for safeguarding. We also spoke to four subject leaders. 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:

- About three fifths of pupils have studied from home at some stage during the autumn term, while isolating. No pupils have been sent home more than once.
- All pupils study the school's usual range of subjects except for music. Leaders expect that all pupils will experience the usual curriculum by the summer term 2021.
- Staff have checked pupils' subject knowledge and new starting points. They have identified where pupils need more time to deepen their knowledge. Teachers have modified their plans to help pupils catch up.
- In Years 7 to 9, tests and informal assessments have shown the gaps in pupils' subject knowledge. Teachers use this information to go over work missed in the last academic year. They have found that Year 8 pupils have not remembered work from the last academic year and need to repeat certain areas. This includes circles in mathematics and colour in art.
- In Years 10 and 11, changes to GCSE examinations have led to adjustments to teachers' plans. In English, extra time is given to studying Shakespeare's use of language to take account of what pupils missed in the last academic year. In other subjects, some subject content has been simplified and teaching concentrates on essential knowledge. For example, computer studies work emphasises the use of computers in the real world.

- Pupils who are accessing remote education are following a similar timetable as those in school but with adjusted timings. Leaders have introduced a commercial system that uses the telephone for remote education. Pupils are given paper copies of work and teachers hold lessons, and provide one-to-one support, via phone calls. All pupils have an individual 'pin' number so that the phone calls are private.

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 deputy chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Hackney. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Brian Oppenheim
Her Majesty's Inspector