



11<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Dear Parent/guardian,

I am pleased to let you know that our recent remote Ofsted inspection on March 3<sup>rd</sup> 2021 received positive feedback.

This inspection was conducted under section 8 (2) of the Education Act 2005 (as amended) and in accordance with Ofsted's published procedures for visiting schools while routine inspections remain temporarily suspended.

Having considered all the evidence, and taking into account the impact of COVID-19 on the school, Ofsted is of the opinion that at this time:

**Leaders and those responsible for governance, are taking effective action to provide education in the current circumstances.**

To establish this result, Ofsted spoke to me (as Headteacher of Washington Academy), our Multi-Academy Trust Chief Executive, Trust senior leaders, students, staff, and representatives of those responsible for governance. They discussed leaders' actions to provide education to all students during the national lockdowns.

Ofsted also met senior leaders with responsibility for: the curriculum; safeguarding arrangements; students' conduct both in school and when being educated from home; students with SEND; and leaders with responsibility for the school's programmes to help students with their reading. Additionally, it reviewed examples of the school's remote learning curriculum and looked at responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 40 free-text responses, and 43 staff questionnaires.

We are thrilled to see this result having dedicated considerable time and resources to ensure all students continue to receive the highest quality of education despite Covid restrictions.

Covid has inevitably affected all of us over the last year and our focus at Washington is to maintain exceptional levels of teaching in order for students to continue their education the best they can. At some point during the autumn term 2020, almost 90 per cent of students had to be educated remotely. At the time of inspection, around 10 per cent of students were being educated on site and a very small proportion of staff were absent for COVID-19-related reasons. However, Ofsted noted our leaders were managing staff absence effectively through a combination of internal cover arrangements and staff working from home, which meant all students continued to receive their pre-pandemic timetable and curriculum.

The following initiatives were put into place to ensure all students continued to receive excellent teaching and learning opportunities:

- Our remote learning plan was put in place prior to the second lockdown so that we were prepared should students need to work from home again.
- Staff and students were given training on the remote learning platforms.
- All students without any access to ICT devices were provided with these so they could join their remote lessons.
- Staff have external training on how to maximise Microsoft Teams and other online programmes in order to provide high quality teaching and learning from home.
- We implemented a remote learning tracking system, which allowed us to track attendance and engagement to lessons and swiftly provide support where necessary.

- Students were given praise weekly through the praise bulletin and whole school 'Crunchie Friday' assembly.

We are thrilled to see Ofsted commend us on the fact that we have made appropriate decisions about how to amend the teaching timetable to cover the required curriculum with Key Stage 4 teaching maintained enough for students to keep the same courses as those started in Year 10. While Ofsted saw some effective practice in the remote provision, such as the harnessing of technology to provide timely feedback to students about their work. Additionally, teachers are making effective use of support plans to help students with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and continue to support these students who need extra help with their reading.

This has involved:

- Use of the Lexia programme to support students with their confidence and address any gaps in reading.
- Additional literacy intervention classes for identified students during the school day.
- Allocated reading lessons in the school library supported by trained teaching assistants.
- Additional Lexia after school interventions.
- Social skills workshops after school supporting students with their confidence and social awareness.
- Emotional resilience workshops to support students managing emotions

Finally, I am proud to see Ofsted report that leaders in our academy have acted purposefully to make sure the remote learning environment, whether accessed from home or on site, is a safe space for students to be. We have done this by monitoring students' comments in the 'chat' area of the academy's online teaching area and taken action should students fall short of our behaviour expectations. We have also introducing a reporting app where students can highlight instances of bullying for us to address.

For further information on our latest report, please read the full report below.

If you have any questions, or comments, please email our team on [info@washingtonacademy.co.uk](mailto:info@washingtonacademy.co.uk).

Kind Regards,



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Headteacher