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Karen Dixon
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Dear Mrs Dixon

Ofsted remote visit to Ermington Primary School

Following my remote visit with Tracey Reynolds, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 5 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 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 your senior leadership team. 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 (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:

- Most pupils returned to school full time on 7 September 2020. You provided an option for pupils joining Reception to begin on a part-time basis. All pupils are now attending full time.
- Pupils' attendance is similar to attendance at this time last year.
- You have reduced the curriculum this term. Pupils are studying English, mathematics, science, physical education, personal, social and health education, geography, history and art. By January 2021, it is your intention that pupils will return to studying the full range of subjects.
- Teachers have checked on pupils' reading. They have found that pupils in Year 1 need to catch up on some of the phonics learning they missed in the summer term. Pupils are focusing on the target sounds in lessons now.
- Your assessments have shown that writing standards are lower than usual. Teachers are reminding pupils of the importance of accurate spelling and grammar during lessons.
- In mathematics, you have noticed that pupils' problem-solving is not as well developed as it would normally be. To address this, teachers are spending the start of each lesson checking what pupils can remember. Where there are gaps in pupils' knowledge, teachers revisit this learning.
- Teachers are making informal checks on what pupils can remember from the wider curriculum. Knowledge that pupils may have missed is covered alongside the teaching of new topics.

- You have arrangements in place to provide remote learning in case this is needed in the future. You have added to the range of online resources pupils can use and checked that families can access these. Your plans include live online teaching of reading, writing and mathematics.

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

Yours sincerely

Lydia Pride
Her Majesty's Inspector