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14 October 2020

John Jolliffe  
Headteacher  
Newton St Cyres Primary School  
Station Road  
Newton St Cyres  
Devon  
EX5 5DL

Dear Mr Jolliffe

### **Ofsted visit to Newton St Cyres Primary School**

Following my visit with Nathan Kemp, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 1 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 the lead governors for safeguarding and curriculum. 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:**

- You opened the school to all pupils on 7 September 2020. Pupils in all year groups attend full time.
- Pupils' attendance is in line with the normal attendance for this time of year.
- During September, the curriculum focused on ensuring that pupils were emotionally and socially ready to learn. Teachers used texts and discussion to enable pupils to explore their feelings. From October, pupils have begun to study the full curriculum.
- Teachers have assessed pupils' reading skills and knowledge in all year groups. You are using the COVID-19 catch-up premium funding to purchase additional books and provide tailored reading lessons for pupils who have fallen behind. You and your staff have adapted your approach to the teaching of phonics.
- Teachers have assessed pupils' knowledge of mathematics. Teachers have adapted the curriculum with a particular focus on place value. You are using the COVID-19 catch-up premium funding to provide some pupils with additional support to help them catch up.
- Pupils study a range of subjects. Teachers are adapting their lessons to focus on securing pupils' knowledge and understanding post lockdown. For example, in history, teachers are checking pupils' understanding before moving on to more complex concepts.
- You set up the school's online learning platform at the beginning of lockdown. You plan to use it again should it be needed in the future. You also plan to

increase the frequency of telephone contact between pupils and teachers if there were a future lockdown.

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 County Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Susan Aykin  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**