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Sonia Beames
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Dear Mrs Beames

Ofsted visit to Withington Church of England Primary School

Following my visit with Marie Thomas, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 29 September 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. 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:

- The school opened fully to all pupils on 2 September 2020. Pupils have attended full time from this date, including children in Reception.
- The rate of pupils' attendance is similar to the normal attendance at this time of year. You have written to parents to set out the expectations for attendance. Each class forms a 'bubble'. No classes have had to self-isolate.
- Teachers used the first week of term to help pupils get used to being with each other in school. Since then, teachers have been checking pupils' knowledge. You are confident that each class will return to the usual curriculum before the end of this term.
- You are making sure that pupils who have some gaps in their early reading skills receive extra help to boost their phonic knowledge.
- Teachers are checking pupils' understanding of mathematics topic by topic. Key stage 2 pupils' understanding of place value has been assessed. Staff are helping some pupils to revise this work.
- Pupils are learning other subjects as before, but with some minor adjustments. For example, classes are not able to switch rooms as flexibly as they did before.
- You have drawn up a plan for teaching pupils remotely if this should be needed in the coming months.

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 director of education for the diocese of Gloucester, the regional schools commissioner and the director of

children's services for Gloucestershire County Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Paul Williams
Her Majesty's Inspector