

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



16 October 2020

Helen Stocking  
Executive Headteacher  
Newstead Primary Academy  
Waterside Drive  
Blurton  
Stoke-on-Trent  
ST3 3LQ

Dear Mrs Stocking

### **Ofsted visit to Newstead Primary Academy**

Following my visit with Eve Morris, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 28 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, the senior leadership team, the safeguarding officer, the school counsellor and the attendance officer. 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 to all pupils on 2 September 2020.
- Attendance is in line with normal attendance patterns for this time of year. The school works with parents to promote regular attendance at school.
- Pupils returned to their usual curriculum at the beginning of term. Minor adaptations to the curriculum are in place in order to follow government guidance relating to COVID-19. For example, educational visits have temporarily been put on hold. The school is currently looking at other ways to enrich the curriculum in school while visits are not taking place.
- You told us the school is prioritising reading throughout the curriculum. Leaders have made checks on pupils' phonic knowledge and are planning next steps in learning.
- In mathematics, leaders have identified gaps in pupils' times table knowledge and in their problem solving and reasoning. You told us teachers are focusing on these areas.
- All subjects within the wider curriculum are being taught. There are some adjustments. For example, when teaching music, and in the way team sports are played.
- You explained how you use the school's existing on-line learning platforms to deliver remote learning when needed. You say blending classroom teaching and on-line learning is now part of your school's normal practice.

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 Stoke-on-Trent. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Heather Phillips  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**