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Fay Walton
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Walton

Ofsted visit to Whaley Bridge Primary School

Following my visit with Christine Watkins, 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 special needs leader and the leader responsible for curriculum and assessment. 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 7 September 2020. All pupils are attending full time.
- Since the school opened to all pupils, attendance is similar to that seen this time last year. Leaders have supported families who were reluctant to send their children back to school.
- Pupils are studying the full range of subjects. The content in some subjects, such as music and physical education, is currently limited. Leaders plan to resume all activities by summer term 2021.
- Teachers are checking pupils' new starting points. Checks in reading, writing and mathematics have been carried out for all year groups. Teachers have also focused on pupils' well-being.
- Leaders have checked pupils' understanding of phonics in Years 1 to 3. Support with an adult is available for pupils who need extra practice. Leaders have purchased new reading books which match the school's chosen phonics scheme.
- In mathematics, leaders and staff have given priority to number facts and times tables in Years 2 to 6.
- Leaders have changed plans across the wider curriculum to cover any learning that pupils may have missed by not being at school during lockdown.

- Leaders have developed plans to provide remote learning, both online and in paper form. Leaders are checking that all pupils have access to devices so that they can continue learning at home should the need arise.

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

Yours sincerely

Shaheen Hussain
Seconded Inspector