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Caroline Neal
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Dear Mrs Neal

Ofsted visit to Exwick Heights Primary School

Following my visit with Susan Aykin, 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, members of the senior leadership team, leaders responsible for safeguarding, the parent support adviser 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 8 September 2020. Most pupils on the school's roll have returned to school and are attending full time.
- Pupils' attendance is broadly the same as this time last year. Although there have been no confirmed cases of COVID-19, a small number of pupils are receiving remote education. Leaders support parents and pupils who may be anxious about returning to school by communicating the changes to day-to-day routines and the school's safety measures.
- Pupils are studying all subjects in the school's curriculum. Leaders have changed the order of curriculum content in music and physical education to avoid increasing the risk of spreading COVID-19. In modern foreign languages, leaders have temporarily removed singing from the curriculum for the same reasons.
- Leaders are prioritising early reading and phonics. Leaders identified that some year groups need to practise what they have learnt previously before they move on to new learning. They intend to use COVID-19 catch-up funding to invest in additional support, resources and books.
- In early years, leaders state it is 'business as usual'. They are prioritising developing children's reading and writing as they normally would.
- In mathematics, leaders have not needed to adapt the curriculum content or sequencing. However, they are putting more emphasis on developing pupils'

knowledge of number and place value, so they can move on confidently to more challenging learning.

- Leaders are providing remote learning for pupils who are not attending school. Leaders have set up an online platform, where pupils can access lessons and activities. Teachers provide guidance notes to help parents supervise their children with their learning.

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 board of trustees and the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Devon. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Nathan Kemp
Her Majesty's Inspector