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22 October 2020

Fiona Robertson  
Headteacher  
East Brent Church of England First School  
Church Road  
Highbridge  
Somerset  
TA9 4HZ

Dear Mrs Robertson

### **Ofsted visit to East Brent Church of England First School**

Following my visit with Paul Williams, 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 with you and the head of school. 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.
- Pupils are attending full time, including in the Reception Year. You and your staff have encouraged all pupils to attend school. The rate of pupils' attendance is normal for this time of year.
- At the start of term, staff helped pupils get used to new routines, such as regular handwashing. Staff have checked pupils' knowledge in English and mathematics. You expect that pupils will have returned to their usual curriculum during the autumn term.
- You have prioritised phonics and reading. Teachers' assessments showed gaps in younger pupils' phonics knowledge. Staff are giving pupils extra help in these areas.
- In the wider curriculum, some subjects, such as history and geography, have been combined to create more time for tackling gaps in core knowledge, such as phonics. Teachers are also focusing on pupils' handwriting skills in key stage 1. You have found that some pupils need extra practice with their writing.
- Teachers have identified where pupils have gaps in their mathematical knowledge. They are now checking that pupils have a secure understanding of place value.
- You have plans in place to help pupils learn if they must stay at home. These plans build on the work the school provided during 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 local governing body and the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the director of education for the diocese of Bath and Wells, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Somerset County Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Marie Thomas  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**