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Geri Pugliese
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Dear Mrs Pugliese

Ofsted visit to Lightwoods Primary School

Following my visit with Ian Tustian, 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 and members of the senior leadership team, including the senior leader responsible for safeguarding. 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 made 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 3 September 2020. All year groups, including children in Reception, are expected to attend full time.
- You told us that pupils' overall attendance is broadly in line with normal attendance for this time of year. You described the actions that you have taken to encourage pupils to attend, for example communicating to parents that their children are expected to attend school and explaining what the school has done to safeguard and promote pupils' welfare.
- You said that staff have identified where pupils need to revisit previous learning. You explained that pupils are receiving a range of support focused on helping them to build on their learning, and to access the usual curriculum. You intend that the support programme will enable all pupils to return to their usual curriculum by summer term 2021.
- You described how staff have checked children's development and skills in Reception. As a result of these checks, you said that these staff are focusing on developing and improving children's communication and language skills, and personal, emotional and social development.
- Children in Reception started the phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) programme at the beginning of term. Phonics checks have shown that a minority of Year 1 pupils have not remembered the phonics knowledge they learned before lockdown. Teachers have adapted the usual phonics and reading programme for this group of pupils.

- You have recently introduced a commercial reading scheme that is used by pupils in key stage 2. Your aim in doing this is to encourage pupils to read more widely and to help teachers check pupils' reading habits and skills.
- You told us that teachers have checked pupils' mathematical knowledge and understanding, and their ability to use these to solve problems. As a result, staff are focusing on improving pupils' understanding and use of place value and number across all year groups. You told us that the most able pupils are where you would expect them to be in terms of their mathematical learning.
- Teachers have adjusted their plans for music, physical education and art. This is to cover the practical content that pupils missed by not being in school.
- You have plans in place to deliver the usual curriculum remotely should this be required. Teachers have completed training to support this approach. Your plans for remote learning include live and recorded lessons delivered online, and hard-copy materials such as worksheets.

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

Yours sincerely

Peter Humphries
Her Majesty's Inspector