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22 October 2020

Paul Fykin
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Dear Mr Fykin

Ofsted visit to Rushmere Hall Primary School

Following my visit with Tessa Holledge, 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 the senior leadership team. 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 3 September 2020.
- Currently, attendance is the same as it was at this time last year. Staff worked with parents to set clear expectations for full attendance from the start of the autumn term. Leaders sought help from external agencies to support pupils who felt anxious about the return to full-time education.
- Leaders explained that they expect to have their planned curriculum in place for the start of the spring term 2021. The school timetable includes four days with mathematics and English lessons. On Wednesdays, pupils enjoy other subjects and have the chance to complete catch-up work.
- Staff have spent the early weeks of the autumn term finding out where pupils' new starting points are. From these assessments, leaders state they have a clear picture of the gaps in pupils' learning that developed over the spring and summer period. Leaders have ensured that extra staff are available for catch-up work.
- Leaders are checking that books match pupils' reading ability and that every pupil has an appropriate reading book to take home each week.
- Leaders found that pupils had not fallen far behind in their mathematics understanding. However, pupils' fluency and speed of working has slowed. Teachers are sharpening these skills with targeted individual and small group work.

- Leaders and staff are working to ensure pupils continue to have an interesting and exciting wider curriculum. For example, Egyptian re-enactors brought history work to life where external visits have not yet been able to take place.
- Staff have created a bank of online video lessons and activities for remote working. Leaders plan to ensure that by the end of the autumn term, remote learning will reflect the curriculum of the school. Leaders are exploring live online teaching in case whole classes end up having to work from home in the future.

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

Yours sincerely

Fyfe Johnston
Her Majesty's Inspector