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Rhian Driver
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Dear Mrs Driver

Ofsted visit to Red Lane Primary School

Following my visit with Sheila Iwaskow, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 8 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, your deputy headteacher and the executive headteacher, who is also the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust. We spoke with the school leaders responsible for safeguarding, attendance, behaviour and the curriculum. 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, a different 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:

- You opened the school on 7 September 2020. Children in Nursery Year and Reception Year had a phased introduction to school during the first week. All year groups are now expected to attend on a full-time basis.
- Pupils' attendance is above what it was at this time last year.
- You told us that all pupils are studying the full range of curriculum subjects. However, the content of some subjects has been adapted to take account of pupils' new starting points. You aim to return pupils to their usual curriculum content by summer term 2021.
- Across all subjects, teachers are identifying where pupils have gaps in their knowledge. You have a range of strategies in place to help pupils to catch up. For example, you have temporarily extended the school day for key stage 2 pupils on Wednesdays and Thursdays.
- You have checked pupils' new starting points in phonics in early years, key stage 1 and Year 3. Your teachers have found that pupils are not too far behind in their reading, with the exception of Year 3, where you have identified greater gaps. Extra support is in place so that pupils, including those in Year 3, can catch up as soon as possible.
- In mathematics, you have found that many pupils have forgotten some basic number skills, such as their recall of the multiplication tables. You have put catch-up sessions in place for all year groups.

- You have assessed pupils' new starting points in subjects such as history and geography. To help pupils to get back on track, you have introduced 'super learning' days. The aim of these days is to allow teachers to prioritise the most important knowledge and skills that pupils have missed across different subjects.
- You have considered which remote learning options are most helpful to parents in supporting their children's learning. You have invested in more of these resources, including one where pupils can see their teachers deliver lessons via a video link. You feel ready to use remote learning in the future, if it is needed.

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

Yours sincerely

Sue Eastwood
Her Majesty's Inspector