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27 October 2020

Dominic Crompton  
Headteacher  
Skilts School  
Gorcott Hill  
Redditch  
Worcestershire  
B98 9ET

Dear Mr Crompton

### **Ofsted visit to Skilts School**

Following my visit with Jo Evans, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 15 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 to you in your capacity as headteacher and senior leader for safeguarding, as well as senior and middle leaders. 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:**

- You opened the school to all pupils on 3 September 2020. All pupils are expected to attend full time.
- Since the school opened in September, attendance is below the rate normally seen for this time of year. No pupils were isolating at the time of the visit. A few pupils are not attending school because some local authorities have not yet agreed funding and transport arrangements. Staff keep in regular contact with pupils who are not attending and make home visits to check on their well-being.
- Staff are in the process of implementing the newly-developed curriculum. You are confident that this will be fully in place before summer 2021. You decided that pupils needed to follow a 'recovery' curriculum at the beginning of the autumn term for a few weeks. This curriculum incorporated a range of curriculum subjects but had a specific focus on personal, social and emotional education, to help pupils express themselves and re-engage in learning.
- Staff have been focusing on the gaps in pupils' learning which were identified when you last carried out assessments in March 2020. You are also noticing some additional gaps in pupils' learning during lessons this term and staff are amending the content and focus in lessons to address these.
- You are providing additional support for pupils to help them to catch up with their reading. You have reviewed pupils' phonics skills and are adjusting groups so that pupils get the right support they need.

- You told us that in mathematics, there is usually a focus on place value and number at this time of the year. This is continuing, but teachers are now spending more time on these concepts because you have noticed that pupils need additional time to revisit their learning.
- Pupils are studying the full range of national curriculum subjects. You told us that information technology is not being taught in as much depth as it should be, because of the adaptations you have made related to COVID-19 restrictions. Some shared spaces, such as the art and music rooms, are not being used, so you have made sure that all department 'bubbles' have the resources they need to teach these subjects. You are focusing on outdoor learning wherever possible.
- You have made plans to deliver remote learning, aligned to your curriculum, in the event of any future local restrictions. Pupils who are not yet attending school are receiving some remote learning. You are in the process of sourcing computer equipment for pupils to use at home, to support 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 interim executive board, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Birmingham. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Deb Jenkins  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**