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22 October 2020

Kevin Ward  
Headteacher  
Holmleigh Primary School  
Dunsmure Road  
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Dear Mr Ward

### **Ofsted visit to Holmleigh Primary School**

Following my visit with Adam Vincent, 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, the assistant headteachers, the teacher responsible for attendance and the leader with responsibility 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 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 pupils in Years 1 to 6 on 7 September 2020. Children in Reception and Nursery have had a staggered start to school over three weeks.
- Attendance is broadly in line with attendance for the same period last year. Leaders have made personal contact with those few pupils whose families are reluctant for them to return, to encourage them back.
- Leaders have chosen to concentrate on English, mathematics, and personal and social education in the first part of the year to make sure pupils' well-being is a focus. Music, art, physical education, Spanish and history are also being taught. Leaders plan for all pupils to be taught the full curriculum by the second half of this autumn term.
- Teachers have carried out assessments of pupils' starting points in all year groups. They have used this information to plan individual and small-group work to close gaps in pupils' learning.
- Tests show that some children have gaps in their knowledge of letter sounds and many children find it difficult to read longer texts. Teachers have adjusted teaching to take account of lost learning.
- In mathematics, teachers have checked what pupils have not learned from the previous year's programme. There is no common pattern to learning gaps. Teachers are planning a mixture of revision and individual and small-group catch-up work to close gaps in learning.

- In the wider curriculum, informal assessments are taking place as each subject is introduced. Teachers are looking at how topics can be adjusted to include important learning from the summer term 2020.
- The school will deliver remote learning using email and paper-based work packs. The number of families without internet access is a barrier to delivering the full curriculum.

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

Yours sincerely

Bryony Freeman  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**