

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



20 October 2020

Sarah Penny
Headteacher
Plumpton School
Plumpton
Penrith
Cumbria
CA11 9PA

Dear Mrs Penny

Ofsted visit to Plumpton Primary School

Following my visit with Naomi Taylor, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 1 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 and the upper key stage 2 teacher. 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 2 September 2020. All pupils are attending full time.
- Attendance is above the normal rate for this time of year.
- Teaching resumed in all subjects from the start of term. You have altered the content of the design and technology and music subject curriculums.
- You have undertaken checks to identify where pupils are up to in learning to read. Younger pupils who have fallen behind with their knowledge of phonics and early reading receive extra help to catch up. In key stage 2, teachers have increased the time allocated to the teaching of reading to help pupils get back on track.
- In mathematics, you are making similar checks on pupils' knowledge. You have prioritised helping pupils regain their fluency in addition, subtraction, multiplication and division.
- In subjects like history, you have identified the important learning that some pupils may have missed or forgotten during the spring and summer terms. Teachers are adapting their plans so that this learning can be covered in future topics.
- Teachers have developed their expertise in delivering the curriculum using an existing online platform. Should it be needed, you are confident that the school is well placed to make further use of remote 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 governing body and the director of children's services for Cumbria. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Garry White
Her Majesty's Inspector