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Karen Banford
Headteacher
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Worcestershire
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Dear Mrs Banford

Ofsted visit to Cherry Orchard Primary School

Following my visit with Jonathan Leonard, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 6 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 deputy headteacher. 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 reopened to all pupils on 3 September 2020. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 were expected to attend full time. Children in Reception attended on a part-time basis until 17 September 2020. This was because the usual summer-term induction days could not take place this year.
- Attendance in the first week of term was high. It has dipped since then, and overall attendance is slightly below what you would normally expect for this time of year. You have reminded parents about the school's expectations for pupils' attendance.
- In all year groups, pupils are studying their usual subjects. You told us that staff training to support the school's newly refreshed curriculum has been delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic. You believe that by summer 2021, or earlier, you will have your redesigned curriculum fully in place.
- Teachers are carrying out assessments to find out what pupils know so that they can teach the things pupils have missed. In mathematics and other subjects, staff have identified some focus areas. For instance, fractions work that would normally happen in the summer term has been disrupted this year. In response, you and your team have set new expectations for this term's work.
- You are buying new reading books and reviewing teaching methods as part of your work to get pupils back on track with reading and writing. You believe that this is an important priority at the moment.
- You have recently purchased a digital resource to support remote learning, should this be needed. You have also bought text books that pupils can use at home. These new resources support the work that is happening in class.

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

Yours sincerely

Martin Pye
Her Majesty's Inspector