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Dear Mrs Kent

Ofsted visit to Downs View Infant School

Following my visit with Lee Selby, 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, the deputy headteacher, the family liaison officer and four curriculum 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:

- The school opened to all pupils on 3 September 2020. Pupils in Reception Year had a phased start until 21 September. Since 21 September, all pupils have been expected to attend full time.
- Pupils' rates of attendance are higher than they were at this time last year. You told us that staff had maintained regular contact with those pupils who were anxious about coming to school in September and that this helped them return to school.
- You have asked teachers to focus on teaching more personal, social and health education over the past four weeks. You decided to do this to support pupils' well-being and to help them to get used to working with others.
- Staff have checked pupils' starting points across all subjects. In early years and Year 1, teachers have increased the time dedicated to teaching phonics because they have found out that pupils are not where they should be in their phonics knowledge. Pupils who need extra help in reading have received more support from staff.
- In mathematics, teachers have used what they have learned about pupils' starting points to adapt the curriculum. For example, in Year 2, staff have focused on teaching pupils place value before moving on to more complex topics.
- In the wider curriculum, teachers have made adaptations in some subjects, such as physical education (PE) and science. In PE, staff have focused on

increasing pupils' stamina. In science, teachers have been working on improving pupils' scientific vocabulary.

- You have organised a variety of activities for pupils, should they need to learn remotely in the future. These activities are closely aligned to the current 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 Kent. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Harry Ingham
Her Majesty's Inspector