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Dear Mrs Lowe

Ofsted visit to Foxyards Primary School

Following my visit with Chris Stevens, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 9 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 and the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust. 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 1 September 2020. From this date, pupils were expected to attend full time, except for some pupils with specific needs.
- Overall attendance for the term is very slightly below what you would normally expect, due to some families taking holidays that they were unable to take during the lockdown period.
- Pupils are studying their usual subjects, with some adjustments across the school. For example, four pupils in Years 3 and 4 are currently not being taught modern foreign languages. You told us that this is so these pupils can focus on their literacy and mathematics skills. You plan to return to the teaching of all subjects by summer 2021. The school is offering extra-curricular activities and continues to provide its wrap-around care for pupils before and after school.
- You are using information about what pupils currently know and understand in reading and mathematics to target support differently in different year groups. For example, in early years you are focusing on children's communication and language skills. In Year 2, the focus is on pupils' phonics knowledge. In Years 5 and 6, you are prioritising the teaching of number work and the application

of times tables. You told us that your checks and observations have found these to be priority areas after the COVID-19 lockdown.

- You are using blended learning, a mixture of video lessons and work packs to support pupils who are self-isolating. The work provided is in line with this term's classroom work. The school has purchased extra computer resources to ensure that pupils can access this work from home if needed.

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

Yours sincerely

Heather Phillips
Her Majesty's Inspector