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Melissa Cliffe
Headteacher
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Dear Miss Cliffe

Ofsted visit to Basildon C.E. Primary School

Following my visit with James Broadbridge, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 20 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 well-being leader, the school business manager and the senior 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 pupils in Years 1 to 6 on 2 September 2020, with the expectation that they attend full time. Reception-age children started full time on 8 September 2020.
- Pupils' attendance is lower than that normally seen at this time of year. Leaders are encouraging better attendance by providing extra guidance and support to pupils' families.
- Pupils are studying their usual range of subjects. Teachers are checking pupils' knowledge in subjects in the wider curriculum. They are using this information to adapt lessons to include any missed learning before moving pupils on to new learning. Teachers have changed the order in which some of the content is being taught in physical education and music.
- Teachers have carried out checks on pupils' phonic knowledge. They have adjusted phonics teaching from Reception to Year 2 to help pupils revise the trickier sounds. Teachers in Years 3 to 6 are focusing on developing pupils' vocabulary and comprehension skills.
- In mathematics, teachers have identified aspects that pupils need to revisit before moving on to new ones. Teachers are particularly helping pupils with their reasoning and problem-solving skills in all year groups.

- Leaders have set up a system to deliver remote learning in all subjects for all year groups. This will be delivered through a combination of pre-recorded and live lessons that match the school's normal curriculum and daily timetable.

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 West Berkshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Shazia Akram
Her Majesty's Inspector