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Angela Griffiths
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Dear Mrs Griffiths

Ofsted visit to Denfield Park Primary School

Following my visit with Shaheen Hussain, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 21 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, senior leaders and a member of the pastoral team with a responsibility for safeguarding. 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 in Years 1 to 6 on 3 September 2020. In the Reception Year, children have attended full time since 14 September 2020. Children attending Nursery joined the school part time from 7 September 2020.
- Attendance since the start of term has been higher than this time last year.
- Teachers have prioritised English and mathematics since the start of term. They have also used class time to support pupils' well-being. Other subjects, such as geography, are receiving less curriculum time than normal.
- Pupils have not returned to learning the school's usual range of subjects. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are not learning German. Most pupils are not studying music. Leaders aim to reintroduce these subjects by summer 2021.
- In mathematics, teachers have focused on place value as a result of checking what pupils remembered. They are spending more time than previously, supporting pupils' mental arithmetic skills.
- Teachers' assessments have revealed gaps in pupils' knowledge of phonics. They have arranged pupils into groups to revisit specific sounds. Some pupils are not reading as often as they did.
- Teachers are beginning to check what pupils remember in other subjects. Subject leaders have plans to change the curriculum if needed.

- In the early years, children need more help than would usually be the case. Staff are concentrating on developing children's communication and language, and self-care.
- Extra-curricular activities are currently not taking place to avoid pupils mixing with others who are not in their 'bubble'.
- Teachers use the school's website to provide remote learning for pupils who are absent. Leaders have plans to improve remote education, including staff training to improve teachers' use of technology.

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

Yours sincerely

Rachel Tordoff
Her Majesty's Inspector