

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



4 November 2020

Rachael Schofield and Vicky Tyas  
Co-headteachers  
Bassingbourn Primary School  
Brook Road  
Bassingbourn  
Royston  
Hertfordshire  
SG8 5NP

Dear Mrs Schofield and Miss Tyas

### **Ofsted visit to Bassingbourn Primary School**

Following my visit with Paul Wilson, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 8 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 both and to the assistant 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 12 September, after gradually inviting different year groups into school over the previous week. A handful of pupils are attending part time as part of a phased return to school.
- Attendance is very similar to what it was at this time last year. You gave parents and pupils the chance to visit the school, before it reopened, in order to reassure them about the things you had put in place to keep everyone safe.
- Pupils throughout the school are learning about all the subjects in the national curriculum. However, some subjects, such as music and French, are not being taught in the same depth that they were before March 2020, because you are concentrating, for now, on English and mathematics. You expect to have the school's usual curriculum fully in place by summer 2021.
- Staff have assessed pupils throughout the school, giving you a 'baseline' of where pupils are in English and mathematics. You have found that pupils' reading is behind where it would be usually. As a result, teachers are spending more time on teaching reading and phonics.
- In mathematics, assessments have been focused on finding the gaps in pupils' knowledge. You have found that pupils' knowledge of multiplication tables is not where you would usually expect it to be. You are currently considering which pupils might need more support in mathematics.
- Although English and mathematics are your greatest priorities currently, pupils continue to learn about a wide range of subjects. Personal, social and health education has been a particular focus, over the first few weeks of the new school year, as staff help pupils to settle back into their learning routines.

- You have sent workbooks home for all pupils, in case they are needed, for example in the case of future local restrictions. You also have plans in place for staff to teach 'live' lessons to pupils, using the school's digital platform.

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

Yours sincerely

Wendy Varney  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**