

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Mark Whyman
Headteacher
Heath Fields Primary School
52 Field Avenue
Halton
Derby
DE65 5EQ

Dear Mr Whyman

Ofsted visit to Heath Fields Primary School

Following my visit with Rachel Tordoff, 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 assistant headteacher and the curriculum leader. 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:

- All pupils returned to school part time on 3 September 2020. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 returned full time from 7 September. Children in Reception returned full time from 5 October.
- Attendance figures are lower than normal for this time of year. Attendance is beginning to improve now that all pupils are in school full time.
- All pupils are studying the usual curriculum except for the practical aspects of music. Teachers are delivering subjects using a theme, for example based on 'The Tin Forest'. Leaders plan that pupils will return to the full curriculum in summer 2021.
- Teachers have formally assessed pupils in Years 3 and 6. In other year groups, teachers have checked what pupils know and remember.
- Reading is a priority. Some children in Reception and pupils in Year 3 have gaps in their phonics skills and knowledge. Some pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 need to develop their reading comprehension skills. Some pupils need encouraging to read for pleasure.
- Pupils have not remembered some of the mathematical skills that they had learned. Class teachers are using their knowledge of pupils' starting points to amend the curriculum. Some pupils are receiving additional support to help them catch up.
- Leaders have a system to deliver the curriculum remotely should it be required.

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

Yours sincerely

Jayne Ashman
Her Majesty's Inspector