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Teresa Gilbert
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Gilbert

Ofsted visit to Bowlsh Infant School

Following my visit with Stewart Gale, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 13 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. 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 fully to all pupils in Years 1 and 2 on 7 September 2020. Children in Reception, following their induction, started on 14 September 2020.
- At the time of this visit, school attendance was broadly in line with the normal attendance for this time of year.
- Pupils are learning their usual range of subjects but with some modifications in practical subjects, such as physical education and music.
- In Reception, teachers are focusing on children's personal, social and emotional development, alongside early reading and pre-writing skills.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have completed assessments in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers are using the assessment information to plan the order in which key concepts and knowledge is to be taught.
- Teachers have undertaken checks to establish where pupils are up to in learning to read. In Year 1, some pupils have forgotten their phonic knowledge. You are providing additional support to help these pupils catch up in phonics and reading.
- In mathematics, teachers have pinpointed gaps in pupils' knowledge, for example, of place value. Teachers are using this information to adapt learning activities to help pupils catch up.

- In the wider curriculum, you recognise that teachers will not be able to cover all the subject content that was missed during the national lockdown, such as in history and geography. However, teachers are looking to see how these gaps can be covered in future topics.
- The school has provided remote learning for all pupils. You have plans in place to provide online and paper-based resources should they be required in the future.

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

Yours sincerely

Jen Southall
Her Majesty's Inspector