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28 October 2020

Christina Holdsworth  
Headteacher  
Hillside Nursery School  
Cedar Road  
Haslingden  
Rossendale  
BB4 5NH

Dear Mrs Holdsworth

### **Ofsted visit to Hillside Nursery School**

Following my visit with Tim Vaughan, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 1 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 class teacher, the vice-chair of governors and the school administrator. 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 nursery school reopened its doors to all children on 2 September 2020.
- Attendance is higher than at this time last year.
- Children access all seven areas of learning in the early years foundation stage. Children's personal and social skills, and their emotional well-being, are top priorities this term. You have reorganised the way in which some subjects are taught, such as music and dance.
- The teaching of reading is high priority for all children. You and your staff have assessed children's new starting points in phonics. Children have lots of opportunities for mixing letter sounds to form simple words.
- In mathematics, you have identified what children know. You found that children recognise numbers confidently. However, they need more practice in learning to sequence numbers.
- You already have a range of learning opportunities available online for children. You and your staff plan to build on, and extend, this range to be ready in the event of any future local restrictions. You plan to provide training for parents and carers so they can help their children to use these resources.

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 vice-chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Lancashire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Sheila Iwaskow  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**