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Ms Zena J Lines
Headteacher
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Dear Zena Lines

Ofsted visit to South Walney Junior School

Following my visit with Naomi Taylor, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 15 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 with you and the senior leadership team, including the staff responsible 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 on 2 September 2020.
- Pupils' current rate of attendance is higher than it was at the same time last year.
- Alongside English and mathematics, you have prioritised the teaching of relationships, sex and health education to help pupils settle back into school.
- Teachers have resumed delivering all subjects in the normal primary curriculum. They have incorporated key subject content and vocabulary that were not taught in English or mathematics in the summer term into their plans for this year.
- Teachers' checks found that pupils were not as accurate or fluent in reading as they were in March 2020. Pupils are spending more time on developing their reading accuracy and fluency across the curriculum.
- In mathematics, teachers' checks have shown that pupils' knowledge of arithmetic has improved. In contrast, they are struggling to solve mathematical problems. Teachers are shaping activities to help pupils regain their problem-solving and reasoning skills.
- You have developed a range of resources to support pupils' learning at home. Staff have received training so that they can provide online learning that is in line with the curriculum pupils would receive if they were in school. Where pupils have limited access to home computer equipment, you continue to provide paper copies of 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 chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Cumbria. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

John Donald
Her Majesty's Inspector