

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



10 November 2020

Paul Adams
Headteacher
Furzeham Primary School
Higher Furzeham Road
Brixham
Devon
TQ5 8BL

Dear Mr Adams

Ofsted visit to Furzeham Primary School

Following my visit with Sue Costello, 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 to you and members of the leadership team. You are the leader 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 fully for all pupils to attend on 7 September 2020.
- Pupils' rates of attendance are similar to those seen at this time last year.
- At the start of term, you focused on promoting pupils' well-being and physical education. Teaching staff also used this period to check pupils' starting points in reading, writing and mathematics.
- You have not yet undertaken checks to see what pupils know in other subjects, such as history and geography. There are plans in place for this to happen.
- You found that some pupils in key stage 1 need additional support with their phonics. You have introduced additional daily phonics sessions to support pupils who have fallen behind.
- In mathematics, teachers found that some pupils have forgotten key number facts and calculation methods. You have adjusted the curriculum to allow pupils additional time to revisit what they have not remembered.
- You decided to reduce the amount of time dedicated to other subjects. These are: history, geography, art, modern languages and music. Teachers are using this time to help pupils catch up in mathematics and reading.
- You have plans in place to gradually reintroduce all subjects back into the curriculum. Leaders are confident that all pupils will be studying their usual curriculum before Summer 2021.

- Children in Nursery and Reception are following the early years curriculum.
- Leaders have developed a system for remote learning. You have plans in place to refine your approach. Should we go into lockdown again, you are confident that all pupils will continue to be able to access the full curriculum.

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

Yours sincerely

Matt Middlemore
Her Majesty's Inspector