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4 November 2020

Mike Fairclough  
West Rise Junior School  
Chaffinch Road  
Eastbourne  
East Sussex  
BN23 7SL

Dear Mr Fairclough

### **Ofsted visit to West Rise Junior School**

Following my visit with Alice Roberts, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 8 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 your senior management team, which included your senior 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:**

- West Rise Junior School reopened fully to all pupils on 7 September 2020. A very small number of pupils are attending part time.
- Pupils' attendance is above where it was this time last year.
- While all pupils are studying the full range of subjects, you are prioritising personal, social and health education (PSHE), reading, mathematics and physical education (PE). This is alongside your focus on well-being and character education. The time usually given to whole-school activities like assemblies is creating extra lesson time. You intend to go back to the usual timetable by April 2021.
- Teachers have checked individual pupils' reading to identify those who need additional support. You are continuing to build up a full picture of the gaps in pupils' reading knowledge and understanding. Checks on Year 3 pupils' starting points in phonics have revealed that these are broadly similar to those of your Year 3 pupils last year.
- Staff have begun to check pupils' understanding of aspects of mathematics. You have reprioritised your curriculum to take account of the impact of COVID-19. Older pupils are receiving individual support to help them catch up on missed learning. You plan to continue to develop your understanding of pupils' gaps in mathematical knowledge and understanding as you move through the academic year.
- Before COVID-19, leaders were reviewing the school's curriculum. You explained that doing this work has helped staff to reorder lessons and topics so that they meet the current needs of pupils to ensure they catch up.

- You have plans to further develop remote education online. Pupils are working on skills that will help them with this in their current computing lessons. You will provide paper-based learning to those who need it.

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 East Sussex. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Phil Minns  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**