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6 November 2020

Michelle Richards  
Headteacher  
Eslington Primary School  
Hazel Road  
Gateshead  
NE8 2EP

Dear Mrs Richards

### **Ofsted visit to Eslington Primary School**

Following my visit with Gill Wild, 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, the head of school and two assistant headteachers. 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 9 September 2020. Pupils are expected to attend full time.
- Attendance has been broadly in line with the normal attendance for this time of year.
- Pupils are studying the usual range of subjects. You explained that you are giving more time to supporting pupils' social and emotional needs and to addressing gaps in their reading, writing and mathematics. You expect to return to the usual curriculum by Easter 2021.
- At the time of the visit, teachers were in the process of checking pupils' starting points. You explained that it was already apparent to teachers that some pupils had gaps in their knowledge in reading, writing and mathematics. You also explained that some pupils, particularly pupils with autism spectrum disorder, needed more time and support than usual to adapt to new routines that were being followed as a result of COVID-19.
- Teachers are providing extra phonics sessions for younger pupils who have missed out on regular daily practice. This is to help them recall some sounds that they have forgotten. You also described how the Year 1 and 2 classrooms have been adapted to allow a stronger focus on social and emotional development and on language and communication, as you feel pupils need more time to develop these skills.
- The school plans to deliver education remotely, should this be needed as a result of further restrictions. You intend, wherever possible, to provide your usual curriculum content. Leaders explained that some content would be

provided digitally and some through textbooks. You also intend to signpost pupils to online activities you would normally be using if pupils were in school.

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

Yours sincerely

Chris Smith  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**