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Karen Menis
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Dear Mrs Menis

Ofsted visit to Shakespeare Primary School

Following my visit with Sue Costello, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 20 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:

- You opened the school to all pupils on 3 September 2020. Children joining the Reception class attended part-time for the first two weeks of term.
- Attendance rates are below those seen at this time last year. A number of pupils have been absent due to a virus that is not connected to COVID-19.
- Pupils began studying their usual curriculum from 3 September 2020. At the start of term, you focused on pupils' well-being. Teaching staff also used this period to check what pupils had remembered in reading, writing and mathematics.
- You have checked what pupils know and have remembered in nearly all other subjects. You have plans in place to check all subjects by the end of this term.
- In mathematics, some pupils' recall of number facts is not where teachers would like it to be. A programme of revision has started to support pupils to get back on track.
- You have also introduced extra reading sessions throughout the school. In key stage 1, this is to help pupils catch up with their phonics. In key stage 2, this is to support pupils' understanding of what they have read.
- Pupils are now studying the same subjects as before March 2020, but with some changes to the music and physical education curriculum. For example, you have plans to teach singing later in the school year.

- Children in Reception are following the early years curriculum. You explained to us that children’s communication and language skills are not where you would like them to be. Therefore, you are currently focusing on this area of learning.
- Leaders have developed a system for remote learning. You have plans in place to develop your approach further. Should we go into another period when schools are only open to some pupils due to COVID-19 restrictions, you are confident that all pupils will continue to be able to access the 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 board of trustees and the chief executive officer of the Learning Academies multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children’s services for Plymouth. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Matt Middlemore
Her Majesty’s Inspector