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Alison Higgins
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Higgins

Ofsted visit to Barham Church of England Primary School

Following my visit with Harry Ingham, 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, the deputy headteacher and the assistant headteacher. 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:

- Your school opened to pupils in Years 1 to 6 on 2 September 2020, when they were expected to attend full time. Reception Year children initially started back part time on 14 September 2020. By 5 October 2020, they too were expected to attend full time.
- Pupils' current attendance is similar to that of this time last year.
- Across all year groups, pupils are studying all of the subjects that they usually would. You explained that this reflects your desire for pupils to experience a sense of normality at school as much as possible. Local trips, linked to the curriculum, are taking place as normal.
- You have put in place some temporary adaptations to enable all pupils to access every subject. For example, singing in music is occurring in smaller groups.
- In reading, teachers in Years 1 to 3 have undertaken checks on pupils' phonic knowledge. You have used this to identify those who may need some additional help to catch up.
- In mathematics, there is currently a whole-school focus on teaching place value. Daily mental mathematics quizzes are also being used by teachers to check pupils' mathematical knowledge.
- Across the wider curriculum, subject leaders have identified new gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills, which are a result of missed learning from the spring and summer term. Teachers are currently looking at how these can be

addressed during this academic year. For example, in geography, you intend to run a whole-school focus week to help improve pupils' fieldwork skills.

- You have a plan in place for the delivery of remote education in all subjects, should it be required. This caters for both individuals or class 'bubbles' needing to self-isolate. These plans include recorded lessons by teachers and signposting pupils and their families to publicly available online 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 director of education for the diocese of Canterbury, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Kent. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Michael Green
Her Majesty's Inspector