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Donna Evans
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Dear Mrs Evans

Ofsted visit to Westacre Middle School

Following my visit with Mark Sims, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 22 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 the senior leadership team, including the 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:

- The school opened to all pupils on 7 September 2020.
- Attendance is broadly in line with what it was this time last year.
- Pupils are studying the range of subjects they normally would. You have chosen to make some adaptations to the curriculum. This includes changing the order of the music curriculum in Year 5 and reorganising topics in physical education in Years 5 to 7. Leaders have also prioritised aspects of mental health and well-being in personal, social and health education.
- Teachers' assessment of pupils' reading skills has identified that pupils in Years 5 to 7 need extra practice to read fluently. Leaders have made sure that reading is a priority in a range of subjects and each year group has a key text as a main focus. There are opportunities for small group and one-to-one sessions for any pupil at risk of falling behind. Also, this term you are increasing the number of English lessons which Year 7 pupils have and have reduced lessons in French from two each week to one, as a result.
- In mathematics, teachers' checks have identified that pupils' fluency in number is a priority. Since the start of term there have been extra opportunities for pupils to practise their arithmetic skills and use of formal written methods.
- Leaders have planned a blended approach to remote learning for pupils who are absent as a result of COVID-19. This includes a mixture of online tasks, recorded lessons, live sessions and paper-based tasks. Each pupil will be provided with a remote learning pack. Leaders are confident that they will be

able to implement their plans if any pupils have to self-isolate or if there are any local restrictions.

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

Yours sincerely

Jo Evans
Her Majesty's Inspector