

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



11 November 2020

Damian Booth  
Headteacher  
Seven Fields Primary School  
Leigh Road  
Swindon  
Wiltshire  
SN2 5DE

Dear Mr Booth

### **Ofsted visit to Seven Fields Primary School**

Following my visit with Marie Thomas, 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 two deputy 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 for most pupils on 2 September 2020. Some pupils came back to school gradually. After two weeks, all pupils were attending full time.
- Pupils are allocated to one of six 'bubbles' that stay apart from each other in school. None of these bubbles has been asked to stay at home to self-isolate.
- This term, the rate of pupils' attendance has increased each week. It is now above the rate of attendance for the same time last year.
- Pupils are studying all the subjects that they did before the period when schools were only open to some children due to COVID-19 restrictions. However, teachers have picked out the most important ideas for pupils to concentrate on in each subject. Leaders believe pupils will return to their usual curriculum by the spring term.
- Teachers assessed pupils' starting points soon after the beginning of this term. They found that some pupils had lost ground in writing, and there were gaps in pupils' knowledge in mathematics.
- Leaders are using COVID-19 catch-up funding to provide extra tuition for pupils in mathematics. For example, teachers are helping younger pupils to regain their confidence in addition and subtraction.
- Staff are placing emphasis on pupils' writing skills. They are displaying 'vocabulary splats' on classroom walls to encourage pupils to use a wide range of words.
- Teachers noticed that some pupils' early reading skills had faltered during the period when schools were only open to some children due to COVID-19

restrictions. They are providing additional help for pupils to build their phonic knowledge.

- Leaders are ready to switch to online learning if pupils in one or more bubbles are required to stay at home in the coming months.

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 local governing body, the chief executive officer of the River Learning Trust, the chair of the board of trustees, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Swindon Borough Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Paul Williams  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**