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Claire Hardisty
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Hardisty

Ofsted visit to Thornbury Primary School

Following my visit with Matt Middlemore, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 13 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 one of the assistant headteachers. You are the school's safeguarding leader. 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 7 September 2020. Children joining the Reception class attended part time for the first three weeks of term.
- Pupils' rates of attendance are above those seen at this time last year.
- You introduced a well-being curriculum to help pupils settle back into school. During this two-week period, teachers focused on pupils' personal, social and health education. Pupils began studying their usual curriculum from 21 September 2020.
- Teachers have checked pupils' starting points in reading. You told us that this has helped teachers to identify the precise letter sounds that pupils need more support with. Teachers have used this information to help pupils catch up.
- Teachers have checked pupils' mathematical knowledge. You found that some pupils have forgotten some number facts. You have introduced extra mathematics sessions to prioritise pupils' recall of number.
- You have undertaken checks to see what pupils know in other subjects, such as history and geography. Teachers have identified some gaps in pupils' knowledge from the previous year. You have used this information to adjust your curriculum.
- Children in Reception are following the early years curriculum.
- You have introduced a system to deliver the curriculum remotely. Staff have received additional training, should there be a need for remote learning in the future.

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 Connect 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

Sue Costello
Her Majesty's Inspector