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Karen Appleby
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Appleby

Ofsted visit to The Hackthorn Church of England Primary School

Following my visit with David Carter, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 21 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. 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 3 September 2020. Pupils attend full time.
- Attendance is in line with that usually seen at this point in the school year. At the time of the visit, all pupils in the infant class 'bubble' were self-isolating.
- Pupils are studying most of the school's usual range of subjects. Pupils are not learning a modern foreign language. Leaders plan to resume the teaching of this subject in November 2020.
- Teachers have assessed all pupils in reading. Some younger pupils have gaps in their understanding of phonics. These pupils receive extra phonics lessons before the start of the school day.
- In mathematics, teachers have checked all pupils' knowledge. There are no significant gaps in pupils' understanding.
- Some pupils have lost some of their skills in spelling, punctuation and grammar. Leaders have dedicated more time to the teaching of writing. They have appointed a teacher to provide extra writing sessions so that pupils catch up.
- Teachers have checked what pupils can remember in subjects across the curriculum. Leaders want pupils to improve their physical and mental health. Pupils have more opportunities to exercise during the school day.

- Leaders have developed online learning for pupils who are self-isolating. Teachers deliver virtual lessons. Pupils learn the same curriculum at home as they would in school.

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 Lincoln, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Lincolnshire County Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Steve Varnam
Her Majesty's Inspector