

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



13 November 2020

Katie Ayres
Headteacher
Downsway Primary School
Warbreck Drive
Tilehurst
Reading
Berkshire
RG31 6FE

Dear Mrs Ayres

Ofsted visit to Downsway Primary School

Following my visit with Shazia Akram, 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, the senior leader responsible for safeguarding and the inclusion 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:

- The school opened to all pupils in Years 1 to 6 on 2 September 2020. Reception-age children started full time on 14 September 2020.
- Pupils' attendance is above the usual seen for this time last year.
- All pupils are studying the range of subjects they normally would. Teachers are adapting some aspects of music, physical education and science.
- Teachers have checked pupils' new starting points in English and mathematics. They are providing support to help pupils close gaps in learning, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Teachers are revisiting the sounds that pupils need to know in Years 1 and 2. You are using additional resources to support reading comprehension in Years 3 to 6.
- Teachers' assessments in mathematics have identified the areas in which pupils require further practice. Teachers are providing opportunities in other subjects for pupils to reinforce mathematical concepts.
- In the wider curriculum, teachers are reorganising topics to cover the knowledge that pupils missed during lockdown.

- Pupils who are unable to attend are provided with work that matches learning in school. You have trained staff and pupils on the delivery of remote education. Your plans include pre-recorded lessons and feedback sessions provided by teachers.

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 West Berkshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

James Broadbridge
Her Majesty's Inspector