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17 November 2020

Kyra Siddall-Ward  
Interim Executive Headteacher  
Stafford Junior School  
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Eastbourne  
East Sussex  
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Dear Mrs Siddall-Ward

### **Ofsted visit to Stafford Junior School**

Following my visit with Yasmin Maskatiya, 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 senior leaders. 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 all pupils on 7 September 2020. All pupils are expected to attend full time.
- Pupils' attendance since the beginning of term is broadly in line with the normal attendance for this time of year.
- Pupils are not currently being taught religious education, modern foreign languages or music so they can spend more time learning English and mathematics. Leaders have also altered the information and communication technology curriculum so that pupils are taught more about online safety. Leaders are planning for all pupils to return to their full range of curriculum subjects by the beginning of the spring term 2021.
- Teachers have carried out checks on pupils' English and mathematics abilities. They plan to use the resulting information to help them understand what knowledge and skills they need to concentrate on most with pupils.
- Leaders are prioritising reading. All pupils are being taught phonics to make sure they get back on track. Teachers have checked pupils' phonic knowledge and skills, particularly for Year 3 pupils, and those in other year groups who usually need extra help with their reading.
- All pupils are having extra mathematics lessons. During these lessons, they are taught some of the content they missed when school was closed to most pupils during the summer term.

- Currently, if pupils are absent, they receive prepared packs of paper-based resources which match what is being taught in school. Leaders have plans to train staff and pupils to use digital resources if pupils require remote education 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 interim executive board, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for East Sussex. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Maxine McDonald-Taylor  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**