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Helen Morris
Executive headteacher
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Dear Mrs Morris

Ofsted remote visit to Sopley Primary School

Following my remote visit to your school on 5 November 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. Following changes to government guidance and the imposition of COVID-19 lockdown restrictions, we made this visit remotely to reduce pressure on the school.

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, I spoke to you. I did not speak to pupils.

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 pupils on 7 September 2020. All pupils were expected to attend full time from this date, with Reception children attending part time for the first two weeks.
- Levels of attendance are broadly similar to the same period last year.
- Pupils are studying all national curriculum subjects with some changes to the content that is taught. Some lessons in subjects such as history and geography have been shortened to provide more time for the teaching of reading.
- Staff have assessed pupils' knowledge in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have also had additional assessments of their social skills, speech and language. In other subjects, staff are checking what pupils know and understand before they teach new content.
- Teachers have found that most pupils are reading confidently, although some struggle to recall and understand what they have read. Staff are spending more time teaching comprehension skills. Those pupils who are struggling to read fluently are given more time to read with staff.
- In mathematics, teachers have found that pupils are able to use their calculation skills with confidence, but find making links between different mathematical concepts more challenging. Teachers are delivering a series of

lessons that aim to help pupils to use their calculation knowledge when solving more complex problems.

- Leaders are trialling the school's remote learning strategy and are training staff, parents and pupils to use it. If a pupil is absent, they are able to access either pre-recorded or live lessons online which will mirror the planned curriculum.

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 Hampshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Daniel Lambert
Her Majesty's Inspector