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Gavin Summerfield
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Summerfield

Ofsted visit to Whitleigh Community Primary School

Following my visit with Sue Costello, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 3 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.

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 members of your leadership team. You are the leader responsible for safeguarding. We 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 fully for all pupils to attend on 7 September 2020. Children joining the Reception class attended part time for the first week of term.
- Pupils' rates of attendance are above those seen at this time last year.
- You used the first four weeks of term to establish routines and to focus on pupils' basic skills. Teachers also used this period to check what pupils had remembered in reading, writing and mathematics.
- You have not checked what pupils know and have remembered in other subjects. You have plans to complete these checks by the end of term.
- Pupils began studying their usual curriculum from 2 October 2020. Pupils are now studying the same subjects as before March 2020, but with some adaptations to the music and physical education curriculum.
- In mathematics, you found that in key stage 2, some pupils' understanding of shape, space, measure and data handling is not where you would like it to be. You have adjusted the curriculum to support pupils to get back on track.
- In key stage 1, you found that some pupils need additional reading support. Teachers identified that some pupils have forgotten how to blend letter sounds. You have introduced extra phonics sessions to help pupils catch up.
- Children in Reception are following the early years curriculum. You told us that some children need additional help with their communication and language skills.

- You have recently invested in a system to be able to deliver the curriculum remotely. Should we go into lockdown again, you are confident that all pupils will continue to be able to access the 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 Plymouth. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Matt Middlemore
Her Majesty's Inspector