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Emma Sharp
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Sharp

Ofsted visit to St Bees Village Primary School

Following my visit with Garry White, 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 the senior leadership team. We spoke to the leaders responsible for safeguarding. 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 2 September 2020.
- Pupils' attendance is similar to what it was at the same time last year.
- As well as English and mathematics you have prioritised the teaching of physical education. You have also focused more on personal, social, health and economic education to support pupils as they returned to school.
- You told us that teachers are delivering all national curriculum subjects. They are identifying the learning that was not taught during the summer term and the learning that pupils may have forgotten. Teachers have adapted their curriculum plans to ensure that the content in all subjects is covered.
- In mathematics, teachers are checking on pupils' understanding of important content to establish their new starting points. Teachers have identified that pupils need to spend more time applying their knowledge of calculation methods to problem-solving activities.
- Teachers have found that some younger pupils have forgotten some of the sounds and letters that they have learned previously. You told us that by spending more time on reading and phonics you are helping these pupils to overcome lost learning in reading.
- You informed us that you have systems in place to deliver the curriculum remotely through a range of paper-based and online resources should they be needed. You continue to provide staff with training to develop their expertise in this area.

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

Yours sincerely

John Donald
Her Majesty's Inspector