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Maggie Bostock
Acting headteacher
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Dear Mrs Bostock

Ofsted visit to Hob Green Primary School

Following my visit with Heather Simpson, 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, the director of school improvement and the director of curriculum and professional development. 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 full time to pupils in Years 1 to 6 on 3 September 2020. It opened part time to children in the Reception Year on 7 September 2020, and full time on 9 September 2020. Children in Nursery started school on 15 September 2020.
- Pupils' attendance is higher than it has previously been at this point in the school year. At the time of the visit, the Year 6 'bubble' was working from home.
- You have temporarily reduced the range of subjects that pupils in Years 1 to 6 are studying. You have done this to create more time for English and mathematics. Currently, pupils are not studying music or a modern foreign language. You plan to reintroduce these subjects in the spring term 2021.
- You have checked pupils' new starting points in English and mathematics. In reading, you have found that younger pupils know fewer sounds than is typical at this time of year. You are teaching an additional phonics lesson each day to help pupils to catch up.
- In mathematics, you have found that pupils' understanding of number and fractions is not where you would expect it to be. You are making some changes to the content of the mathematics curriculum to address this.
- In the wider curriculum, you have identified the topics that pupils were not taught in the summer term. You are adapting what you teach during the year to cover the knowledge you want pupils to learn.
- In the Reception Year, you are in the process of checking children's starting points. So far, you have found that children's starting points are lower than in previous years.

- You have a remote education programme in place. Pupils who are isolating study the same subjects as they would if they were in school. They have an English and a mathematics lesson in the morning and study other subjects in the afternoon. Most pupils access teaching online. Paper-based work is available for pupils if needed.

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 board of trustees and the chief executive officer of the DRB Ignite multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Dudley local authority. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Claire Jones
Her Majesty's Inspector