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Sarah Bitcon
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Dear Mrs Bitcon

Ofsted remote visit to Orchard Primary School

Following my remote visit with Ann Pritchard, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), 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, we spoke to you, the deputy headteacher, leaders responsible for safeguarding and lead teachers for mathematics. 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 to all pupils on 2 September 2020. You expect pupils to attend full time.
- You told us that pupils' attendance since the beginning of the autumn term is broadly in line with attendance at this time last year.
- Pupils are studying their usual range of subjects, including music, art and design and technology. There have been some changes to the way in which practical subjects are taught. For example, there are smaller groups in science and fewer opportunities to play instruments in music. You have increased opportunities for pupils to have extra intervention and catch-up sessions.
- Teachers checked pupils' understanding when they returned to school. For example, pupils in all year groups completed literacy and mathematics assessments. Based on the information gathered, you are now covering some skills and knowledge that pupils missed during national restrictions.
- In reading, phonics and mathematics, you told us that pupils' knowledge is assessed through ongoing assessments. You stated that this information is then used to plan lessons to help pupils to close any gaps in their knowledge. You have purchased more reading and mathematics resources, and you say that pupils read every day in school and have a daily mathematics session.
- You have a system in place to deliver remote learning. You have been working on ways to develop feedback to pupils, and now have a remote feedback and

communication system. You plan to develop remote learning further by including more video tutorials and video lessons to support parents and pupils.

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 chair of the board of trustees, and the chief executive officer of the Avonreach multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Worcestershire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Bianka Zemke
Her Majesty's Inspector