

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Diane Broadhurst
Headteacher
Clarice Cliff Primary School
Goldenhill Road
Fenton
Stoke on Trent
Staffordshire
ST4 3DP

Dear Mrs Broadhurst

Ofsted remote visit to Clarice Cliff Primary School

Following my remote visit with Rob Hackfath, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 12 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 (coronavirus) 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, the leaders responsible for safeguarding and the members of the wider leadership team. 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 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:

- At the time of the remote visit, both Year 6 class 'bubbles' were isolating. Since September 2020, approximately a quarter of the pupils have had to work from home.
- Pupils are studying the usual range of subjects. You have made some changes to the sequencing of the subject content. For example, pupils are not going swimming this term. You plan to revisit this in the spring term.
- When all pupils returned to school in September 2020, you carried out checks in reading, writing and mathematics to find the pupils' new starting points. You have identified gaps in their learning and have plans to address these. Teachers check what pupils know and remember before they start work in other subjects. Teachers consider missed learning and build it into current teaching.
- You told us that reading continues to be a school priority. Teachers have built in regular opportunities to teach vocabulary and comprehension skills. You identified that some pupils are not reading as fluently as they used to. They now receive additional practice at school.

- You explained that teachers focus on ensuring pupils remember prior learning in mathematics. Teachers plan regular opportunities for pupils to practise and apply mathematics. You said pupils are currently focusing on place value and number.
- In other subjects, teachers revisit missed learning. If it does not link to current lessons, you plan to teach stand-alone lessons to enable pupils to catch up with missed knowledge.
- In early years, staff noticed that some children do not know familiar stories, songs and nursery rhymes. You said you are spending more time than usual practising these.
- The school provides a mix of paper and online remote learning for when pupils are away from school. Teachers aim to align remote learning with the planned curriculum. However, you said this is challenging when teaching more complex concepts, such as adding fractions and practical aspects of some subjects.

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 Stoke-on-Trent. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Eve Morris
Her Majesty's Inspector