

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



20 November 2020

Heidi McSweeney
Headteacher
Cholsey Primary School
Church Road
Cholsey
Wallingford
Oxfordshire
OX10 9PP

Dear Mrs McSweeney

Ofsted remote visit to Cholsey Primary School

Following my remote visit with Matthew Newberry, 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 (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 and the special educational needs coordinator. 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:

- The school opened to all pupils in Years 1 to 6 on 3 September 2020. Reception children had a phased start beginning on 3 September 2020, before attending full time from 7 September 2020. All pupils are expected to attend full time.
- Pupils' attendance is broadly in line with this time last year.
- All pupils are studying their usual range of subjects. Teachers are adapting some aspects of computing, music and physical education. This term, leaders are giving additional time to pupils' personal, social and health education development.
- Teachers have checked what pupils can remember in English and mathematics. Teachers are reviewing pupils' knowledge across subjects in the wider curriculum as teaching proceeds.
- Teachers are delivering additional sessions in phonics for pupils who have fallen behind in their reading. In Years 3 to 6, teachers are providing opportunities for pupils to boost their vocabulary and comprehension skills across a range of subjects.

- Mathematics teaching is following your usual planned programme. Teachers are planning opportunities to revisit key mathematical concepts such as place value within lessons.
- In the wider curriculum, educational visits and visitors into school have been paused. Teachers are using alternative ways to provide pupils with enrichment opportunities to support learning.
- Staff are providing online and paper-based resources for all pupils who are unable to be in school. Leaders have plans to align remote education to the school's curriculum and to add to the range of resources already being offered.

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 governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Oxfordshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

James Broadbridge
Her Majesty's Inspector