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25 November 2020

Mel Castle  
Headteacher  
Queen Mary Avenue Infants School  
Queen Mary Avenue  
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Lincolnshire  
DN35 7SY

Dear Mrs Castle

### **Ofsted remote visit to Queen Mary Avenue Infants School**

Following my remote visit with Alison Aitchison, 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 and the deputy head teacher, who is also the special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator. The chair of governors, the curriculum leader, the designated safeguarding lead and the English subject lead also joined some of the meetings. 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 this interim visit, the breakfast club pupils were self-isolating. During the visit, a Year 2 'bubble' was sent home to self-isolate. Approximately one third of pupils have had to work from home since the start of term.
- Pupils are studying the usual range of subjects. The content of some subjects, particularly in the wider curriculum, is not being taught in the autumn term as normal. Teachers have planned for content such as school visits and some aspects of the music curriculum to be taught by the end of the summer term 2021.
- You explained that the school is currently placing an even higher priority than normal on English, including phonics, and mathematics. This means that less time than usual is spent teaching the other curriculum subjects.
- You told us that you are using recent assessments of pupils' phonic knowledge to help plan teaching. You are providing pupils with one-to-one sessions in phonics to help them catch up.
- In mathematics, teachers are using information from previous assessments and ongoing assessments in class to check what pupils know and have remembered. Teachers are using this information to plan their lessons.

- You are using your usual systems to assess children’s progress in the early years. You have found that in some elements of the early years and Year 1 curriculum, such as physical development, and speech and language development, children are not as proficient as they would normally be. You are planning the curriculum so that children get opportunities to catch up.
- For any pupil that has to learn remotely from home, you are uploading work to the school website or to your electronic communication system. Pupils can request paper packs if they prefer. When bubbles of pupils are sent home from school to self-isolate, they are provided with a paper pack of planned work.
- Teachers are also directing pupils and parents to access some online resources.

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 North East Lincolnshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jo Sharpe  
**Her Majesty’s Inspector**