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Nicola Hair
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Hair

Ofsted visit to East Herrington Primary Academy

Following my visit with Fiona Manuel, 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 and the senior leadership team. 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 to all pupils on a full-time basis on 14 September 2020.
- Attendance is in line with the usual attendance for the school at this time of year.
- Pupils are studying the full range of subjects that are typically part of the school's curriculum. You told us that teachers have the flexibility to spend more curriculum time on reading, writing and mathematics, to help pupils catch up on content that may have been missed. You plan to return to the school's usual curriculum by summer term 2021.
- Leaders asked teachers to check for any gaps in pupils' knowledge of reading and writing. Teachers have identified that some pupils now need help with writing at length and with their handwriting, punctuation and spelling. Additional support is in place for those pupils who need to catch up.
- Teachers have used a range of assessments to check pupils' new starting points in mathematics. You explained that teachers identified that some pupils need support to rebuild their knowledge of fractions, decimals and percentages. Those pupils who need help to catch up attend additional mathematics sessions.
- Teachers are currently checking what pupils know and remember in subjects such as geography and history. You have identified that some pupils have gaps in their knowledge of content that was taught remotely in the summer term 2020. Leaders told us that curriculum plans have been altered so that

teachers make sure that pupils have the prior knowledge that they need before learning new content.

- Leaders have developed plans to deliver the curriculum remotely when required. The content that is covered by pupils accessing remote education is aligned to the curriculum being studied in school.

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 chief executive of the Balmoral Learning Trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Sunderland. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Graham Findlay
Her Majesty's Inspector