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Sarah Allen
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Dear Mrs Allen

Ofsted remote visit to Roman Way First School

Following my remote visit with Wayne Simner, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 17 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. 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 visit, the Year 2 and Year 4 'bubbles' were isolating. Since the start of September, approximately half of pupils have had to work from home because of COVID-19.
- Pupils are studying the usual range of subjects. In music, you have made some changes to the content that pupils are studying. For example, singing is not happening currently. You plan to reintroduce the full music curriculum by the summer term 2021.
- You have checked pupils' reading skills. You have found that younger pupils do not have the phonics knowledge you would expect. Teachers have grouped pupils so that they can be taught the sounds they do not know. Some pupils are receiving additional phonics teaching to help them catch up.
- In mathematics, you are checking what pupils know at the start of each unit of work. You have noticed that pupils' mathematical vocabulary and sense of number are not as strong as they would be typically. Teachers are adapting what they teach to boost pupils' knowledge in these areas.
- In other subjects, teachers are checking what pupils know and understand as they go along. If pupils are not sure about something, teachers spend longer teaching this before moving on.
- You have found that children in early years are finding it more difficult than usual to share and take turns. To address this, teachers are providing lots of opportunities for children to play games and practise these skills.

- Teachers set daily work in English, mathematics and topic work for pupils who are isolating at home due to COVID-19. Pupils complete some work online and some on paper. If a year group bubble is isolating, all pupils cover the same work. If an individual pupil is isolating, some of the work might be different to their peers. This is partly because they might not have access to specialist resources at home.

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 Worcestershire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Claire Jones
Her Majesty's Inspector