

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



27 November 2020

Gemma Kilner
Headteacher
The Woodlands Primary School
The Crescent
Woodlands
Doncaster
South Yorkshire
DN6 7RG

Dear Mrs Kilner

Ofsted remote visit to The Woodlands Primary School

Following my remote visit with Chris Cook, 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 and other senior leaders, including those responsible for safeguarding. 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, two class 'bubbles' were isolating: one of the Year 1 classes and one of the Year 2 classes. Approximately half of all pupils have had to work from home since the start of the autumn term.
- Pupils are studying all of the subjects that you would normally be covering at this time of year. However, you have allocated more time to teach additional reading and mathematics. This is because you are concerned about the gaps in pupils' knowledge of these subjects, arising from the time when school was not fully open during the spring and summer terms 2020. You expect that this change to the planned curriculum will have ended by the summer term in 2021.
- Checks of pupils' reading abilities showed you that many younger pupils have gaps in their knowledge from the time that school was not open to all pupils. You also discovered that the standard of handwriting, from a number of pupils across all year groups, had declined during this time. To help address this, all teachers have allocated additional learning time to both reading and writing.
- The assessments of pupils' knowledge in mathematics showed you that a number of younger children have not retained their knowledge of the concept of place value. Their teachers are now dedicating additional teaching time to

support them with this. Assessments with older pupils showed you that many mathematics topics had been well retained by pupils throughout this period.

- All the subjects within the wider curriculum are being taught. Pupils have not been formally assessed in the wider curriculum, but you have plans for this to happen later this term and throughout the school year.
- You are providing remote education for pupils who are having to isolate from school. When individual pupils are isolating, this work tends to be a mixture of paper-based and online materials. Where entire bubbles are isolating, you have provided additional opportunities for them to engage in 'live lessons'. You told us that the majority of tasks done remotely are the same as those which had been planned for pupils attending school in person.

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

Yours sincerely

James Duncan
Her Majesty's Inspector