

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



1 December 2020

Rachel Perks
Headteacher
Vale of Evesham School
Four Pools Lane
Evesham
Worcestershire
WR11 1BN

Dear Mrs Perks

Ofsted remote visit to Vale of Evesham School

Following my remote visit with Bianka Zemke, 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, the executive headteacher and your senior leadership team. 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:

- Since the start of term, a very small number of pupils have worked from home as a result of COVID-19.
- You told us that pupils are being taught their normal curriculum. You have changed the order and organisation of some of your teaching. For example, some physical education (PE) is being taught outside rather than inside and some units of PE are now planned for later in the year.
- Some pupils are receiving additional pastoral support, including art therapy and bereavement counselling, to help them to re-engage with learning. You have prioritised personal, social, health and economic education to support pupils' mental health and their interaction with their peers.
- In the early years, you are focusing on supporting children's personal, social and emotional development, especially their social interaction with one another.
- You continue to prioritise the teaching of reading. You are concentrating on embedding basic reading skills, especially phonics.
- You have checked what learning pupils have retained from before the period when schools were only open to some children due to COVID-19 restrictions, particularly their language and communication skills. You are basing your current planning on the gaps you have identified in pupils' understanding. You have also identified aspects of some subjects that were not covered during

that period, for example in science. You are providing additional time in the current timetable to cover the missed learning.

- Depending on pupils' individual needs, you provide them with a range of different ways to access remote learning, including the use of technology, paper-based activities and physical learning resources. Parents have received advice and guidance on how to support their child's learning at home. Pupils who are currently not in school have opportunities to access the class-based teaching through online technology.

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 chair of the board of trustees, and the chief executive officer of the Central Learning Partnership Trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Worcestershire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Ann Pritchard
Her Majesty's Inspector