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2 December 2020

Lauren Chisnall  
Headteacher  
Newton-le-Willows Primary School  
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Newton-le-Willows  
Merseyside  
WA12 9UF

Dear Mrs Chisnall

### **Ofsted remote visit to Newton-le-Willows Primary School**

Following my remote visit with Amanda Stringer, 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 members of the 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, over one third of pupils have had to learn remotely from home for short periods of time.
- Pupils are studying the usual range of subjects. Teachers are spending less teaching time on some subjects. This is so that they can provide additional sessions to help pupils make up for lost learning in reading, writing and mathematics. You expect to return to your usual curriculum by summer 2021.
- Teachers have identified that many younger pupils have fallen behind in their understanding of phonics. Teachers are providing extra lessons to help these pupils to re-visit the phonic knowledge that they have forgotten.
- In mathematics, teachers have checked the learning that pupils missed during the 2020 summer term. An extra lesson is being taught each week to help pupils make up for this lost learning.
- In subjects other than English and mathematics, teachers have identified the learning that has been missed. They have re-organised the content in each subject so that pupils are given opportunities to catch up before they move on to new learning.
- You explained that pupils who are self-isolating have access to a range of online and paper-based resources. Pupils receive a daily timetable that matches the subjects taught in school.

- You hold the view that your system of remote education enables teachers to provide feedback to pupils about the work that they submit. You also explained that teachers can support parents with remote education whenever this is required.

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 St Helens. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

John Tomlinson  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**