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2 December 2020

Carrie Osmond  
Headteacher  
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Dear Ms Osmond

### **Ofsted remote visit to New Siblands School**

Following my remote visit with Sue Costello, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 24 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 leadership team. You are the leader 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, just under half of pupils have had to work from home since the beginning of term. Typically, pupils have isolated for between one and 14 days. During this period, there have been two 'bubble' closures.
- Pupils have a curriculum tailored to their specific needs. In some subjects, other than reading, writing and mathematics, the content has been reduced. This is so teachers can spend more time on pupils' personal development and well-being.
- Teachers have recently completed checks to see what pupils have remembered in reading, writing and mathematics. You found that some pupils have not maintained the stamina or concentration needed to read effectively. In mathematics, you identified that most pupils cannot recall their calculation methods.
- You also told us that there are some other areas where pupils need extra support. These are: gross and fine motor skills, communication and self-confidence. You are confident that teachers will be able to help pupils with these as the year progresses.
- Sixth-form students have not been able to complete their work placements. You told us this has hampered their preparations for adulthood and progression to the next stage of their education.

- Children in the Reception Year are following an adapted version of the early years curriculum. You told us that teachers are prioritising children's communication and language development.
- Remote learning is in place to support pupils who are not able to attend school. You told us that, if individuals or bubbles need to isolate, pupils have access to curriculum activities and recorded sessions. Teachers have received training to help them manage this way of working.

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 board of trustees, and the chief executive officer of Enable Trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for South Gloucestershire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Matt Middlemore  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**