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Kim Robertson
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Dear Mrs Robertson

Ofsted remote visit to Fordingbridge Infant School

Following my remote visit with Daniel Lambert, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 19 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 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:

- Around one in five pupils have missed some days at school this term due to COVID-19.
- Pupils are studying the full range of national curriculum subjects, with some adjustments. Gymnastics and dance will not be taught until later in the year because all physical education is currently taught outdoors, as is any singing. Leaders plan to return to the normal curriculum by the end of the summer term 2021.
- In September, leaders used formal checks and tests to see what pupils remembered in reading and mathematics. In writing, teachers checked pupils' skills as part of everyday teaching over the first month of term.
- In reading, teachers found that many pupils in Years 1 and 2 need extra phonics teaching to strengthen their early reading skills. A higher proportion than usual need more support to develop their understanding of what they are reading.
- Leaders are more concerned about pupils' writing skills. They identified that younger pupils need more support to hold a pencil and form their letters correctly. The period when schools were only open to some pupils, due to COVID-19 restrictions, has had an adverse impact on the experiences and vocabulary pupils have to draw on when writing.
- In mathematics, teachers have found they need to focus particularly on pupils' understanding of place value and their fluency with numbers.

- In other subjects, teachers are adapting lessons based on what pupils missed during the period when schools were only open to some pupils due to COVID-19 restrictions, and their conversations with pupils as they are learning. At the beginning of term, they taught more lessons in personal, social and health education to help pupils settle back into school.
- Teachers post activities online for individual pupils who are having to work from home. These are mostly reading, writing and mathematics tasks, and include recorded clips to explain what pupils are learning. Teachers check the work that pupils upload and give them feedback.
- If 'bubbles' of pupils have to work from home, leaders plan that they will use the same system with different tasks matched to pupils' abilities. They intend that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities will continue to receive the extra support and resources they need.

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

Yours sincerely

Alison Bradley
Her Majesty's Inspector