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Steve Marsland
Headteacher
Russell Scott Primary School
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Dear Mr Marsland

Ofsted remote visit to Russell Scott Primary School

Following my remote visit with John Tomlinson, 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, members of the senior leadership team and the special educational needs coordinator. 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:

- A small number of pupils have had to work from home since the start of the autumn term.
- With the exception of modern foreign languages, pupils are studying the usual range of subjects from the primary curriculum.
- You have made changes to the order in which some subject content is taught. For example, in geography, Year 3 pupils missed learning about volcanoes, mountains and earthquakes in the summer term 2020. Key concepts from this topic have been planned into their history studies of the Romans. You aim to return all pupils to the usual curriculum by the summer term 2021.
- Plans are in place to check what pupils have remembered since March 2020 in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Teachers have identified pupils' new starting points in reading and phonics. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have developed gaps in their phonic knowledge. Extra support is being put in place to help these pupils catch up.
- In mathematics, teachers have found that since March 2020 some pupils have forgotten basic number skills such as multiplication and division. Others are not as confident in using mathematical vocabulary. Teachers are revisiting the teaching of these aspects to help pupils regain this lost knowledge.
- Pupils who are self-isolating are currently provided with a range of online resources. Paper-based resources are available, if required. The activities

provided broadly reflect the curriculum pupils follow in school, with a particular focus on English and mathematics.

- Teachers check pupils' work and give feedback. Parents are provided with guidance on how to access remote education to help them support their children's learning at home.

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

Yours sincerely

Sheila Iwaskow
Her Majesty's Inspector