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Sue Little
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Little

Ofsted remote visit to Low Furness CofE Primary School

Following my remote visit with John Donald, 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 the senior teacher. You are one of the senior leaders 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:

- One in five pupils have worked from home for short periods of time since the start of term.
- All pupils are studying their usual range of subjects. However, you are making some changes to the curriculum content when teachers find gaps in pupils' knowledge. You plan to return to your usual curriculum by the spring term 2021.
- You told us that teachers have focused their assessments on what pupils can remember in reading, writing and mathematics. This is to establish pupils' new starting points in these subjects. You explained that there is support in place for pupils who need to catch up.
- In the wider curriculum, teachers are using everyday lessons to check what pupils can remember of their learning since March 2020. In some subjects, for example geography, pupils have remembered what they previously learned. In other subjects, such as French, pupils need extra practice with key vocabulary.
- In reading, you have found that pupils in Year 1 have the biggest gaps in their learning. These pupils have extra phonics teaching sessions each week to help them to learn the sounds that they missed in the Reception Year.
- You told us that in September 2020, pupils had forgotten how to carry out some calculation methods in mathematics, such as division. Pupils are improving their mathematical skills through additional practice.

- In the early years, you described how the impact of COVID-19 has restricted children's understanding of the wider world. Their teachers have adapted the curriculum to broaden children's knowledge in this area.
- You told us that you provide activities and resources for parents to support their children's learning at home. You said that teachers prioritise activities in mathematics, English and at least one other subject each day. You described how teachers support parents to help their children to learn 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 director of education for the Diocese of Carlisle, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Cumbria. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Claire Cropper
Her Majesty's Inspector