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8 December 2020

Clare Longden  
Headteacher  
Wallbrook Primary School  
off Bradleys Lane  
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Dear Mrs Longden

### **Ofsted remote visit to Wallbrook Primary School**

Following my remote visit with Nicola Harwood, 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 other 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 you opened the school to all pupils in September 2020, a small number have, on occasion, had to work at home.
- Pupils in all year groups are studying their usual subjects. You described how leaders have adapted the curriculum to include important knowledge from the summer term into plans for this year. For example, in Year 6, geographical knowledge from Year 5 has been interwoven into work on the Vikings. Your intention is for all pupils to return to their usual curriculum before summer 2021.
- You explained that teachers check pupils' phonic knowledge to identify gaps in what pupils know and remember. Teachers focus on these gaps. They give pupils time to practise their learning before moving on.
- You told us that reading is a priority for all year groups. Teachers use opportunities in other subjects to build pupils' reading fluency and stamina. In history for example, teachers have selected texts on Alfred the Great to develop comprehension skills. In addition, you said that you have bought a range of new books to encourage pupils to read widely and more often.
- Teachers' checks have identified a rustiness in pupils' mental mathematics. You told us that this has led to pupils lacking confidence in their mathematical knowledge. You explained that teachers are addressing this by giving pupils lots of opportunities to practise their mental mathematics in different ways.

- You explained that teachers have been teaching all subjects in short bursts, with 'brain breaks' to build pupils' concentration. Over time these have lengthened. You plan to increase the time pupils spend being taught physical education to promote their physical health and stamina.
- You described how you provide remote education for pupils who are self-isolating. Pupils are provided with a timetable and a combination of electronic and paper-based resources that reflect the learning in school. You highlighted that some pupils' lack of access to technology is a barrier should they need to work 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 Dudley. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Ian Tustian  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**