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9 December 2020

Helen Turner
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Dear Miss Turner

Ofsted remote visit to Lodge Farm Primary School

Following my remote visit with Damien Loneragan, 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 and two 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 the beginning of term, a few pupils have been isolating at home for a brief time. No 'bubbles' have worked from home. You are pleased that pupils have returned to school happy and ready to learn.
- Pupils are studying the full range of subjects. Teachers are prioritising the teaching of mathematics and English. Some content in other subjects has been changed, and there is a focus on pupils' well-being and mental health. You intend to be teaching your full curriculum by summer 2021.
- You have checked what pupils know and can do in English and mathematics. You plan to check pupils' knowledge and skills in other subjects by the spring term.
- Teachers have identified that pupils in Years 1 to 6 are not routinely applying their grammar skills to their writing and that their stamina for writing has declined since the summer. Teachers are providing extra opportunities for pupils to write in a range of subjects. Children in early years are getting more practice to hold and manipulate small objects, for example holding a pencil.

- You have continued to focus on addressing gaps in pupils' reading skills. Pupils up to Year 3 are having extra lessons to work on their knowledge of sounds and teachers are focusing on helping pupils to read fluently.
- Teachers have identified that pupils' number skills are not as secure as they should be. Teachers in early years are focusing children on practising number facts, while pupils in older years are focusing on securing their understanding of place value.
- Teachers have introduced more outdoor activities than usual in physical education. Some lessons have been shortened, for example languages. More time has been given to the teaching of English and mathematics.
- You have systems in place to deliver online and paper-based remote education to pupils when they are not in school. Pupils at home will study the same curriculum as those in school.

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

Yours sincerely

Cindy Impey
Her Majesty's Inspector