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Zoe Hyams
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Dear Mrs Hyams

Ofsted remote visit to Caistor C of E and Methodist Primary School

Following my remote visit with Vic Wilkinson, 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, the deputy headteacher, the early years leader and other curriculum leaders in the school. 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:

- At the time of the remote visit, one 'bubble' of pupils in Years 4 and 5 was working from home. A small proportion of pupils have needed to self-isolate since the beginning of term. Attendance is slightly below what it typically is in school at this time of year.
- Pupils are studying almost all subjects of the usual curriculum. Physical activities only take place outside, so pupils are not studying dance, gymnastics or drama. Leaders plan for pupils to return to their usual curriculum by summer term 2021.
- Some younger pupils have forgotten some of the phonics that they knew before lockdown. Additional phonics teaching takes place in the afternoon to help them catch up. Leaders have prioritised reading, and teachers make sure that older pupils read every day.
- Teachers have changed the order of what they are teaching in mathematics to include parts of the curriculum that pupils need to revisit, such as area and perimeter. Some pupils have forgotten important knowledge. Teachers make sure that pupils practise this at the beginning of the day in the 'daily dozen' mathematics questions that pupils tackle when they arrive at school.
- Staff have checked what pupils have remembered in French. They help pupils to practise important vocabulary. Teaching in geography includes a recap of skills that some pupils have forgotten, such as using an atlas.

- Teachers provide a mixture of online learning and workbooks for pupils who are learning remotely. These broadly match what pupils are learning in class. Teachers check to see that pupils are completing this work and whether they need any help to do so.

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

Yours sincerely

Hazel Henson
Her Majesty's Inspector