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Alex Keane
Head of School
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Dear Mrs Keane

Ofsted remote visit to Prestolee Primary School

Following my remote visit with Julie Barlow, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 26 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 and four subject leaders. 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:

- Over half of the pupils in the school have had to work from home for a short period of time since the start of term.
- All subjects in the primary national curriculum are being taught. You have made changes to the order in which you teach some physical education and music subject content. You intend to get back to your usual curriculum content earlier than summer 2021.
- Teachers have assessed pupils' reading skills. They have found that many pupils, particularly those in Years 3 and 4, are not reading as fluently as they did before March 2020. Teachers are providing more opportunities for all pupils to read in a wide range of subjects.
- The checks on pupils' mathematical knowledge have shown that pupils in Years 3 to 6 have forgotten some of the vocabulary that they were taught before March 2020. Pupils are also not as confident when solving mathematical problems. All pupils have daily opportunities to solve problems and develop their mathematical vocabulary.
- Teachers have also checked pupils' knowledge in subjects other than English and mathematics. They have adapted their curriculum plans to include important learning that has been missed or forgotten during the summer term 2020. For instance, in history, teachers are addressing gaps in pupils' chronological knowledge by comparing different historical periods.

- You explained how remote education is being delivered to individual pupils who are self-isolating. You told us that lessons match what the other pupils are learning in class. Most pupils access this learning online, though you provide paper-based resources when needed.
- Teachers also provide remote education to class 'bubbles' when they are self-isolating. Teachers upload lessons at set times throughout the day to match the usual class timetable. These lessons are a mixture of online resources and other activities set by the teachers.

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 chair of the board of trustees, and the chief executive officer of the Prestolee multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Bolton. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jackie Stillings
Her Majesty's Inspector