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04 January 2021

James Stanford  
Headteacher  
Stower Provost Community School  
Woodville Stour Provost  
Gillingham  
Dorset  
SP8 5LX

Dear Mr Stanford

### **Ofsted remote visit to Stower Provost Community School**

Following my remote visit with Tonwen Empson, 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 and your subject leader for English. 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:**

- A small number of pupils have studied from home for a short period since the start of the autumn term 2020.
- Pupils are studying the full curriculum. In some areas of learning, you expect staff to continue to discover any gaps in pupils' knowledge as the year progresses.
- Teachers have checked pupils' phonic knowledge in Years 1 and 2, and for some pupils in Years 3 and 4. Your staff have noticed that some pupils, particularly in Year 2, have forgotten certain elements that they had previously grasped. Staff are placing greater emphasis on developing pupils' reading skills throughout the school day.
- Teachers have carried out checks on what pupils remember in mathematics. Some younger pupils have lost confidence in their understanding of place value, and addition and subtraction methods. You have put support in place to help these pupils to catch up.
- In subjects such as history, as each new unit is taught, staff use quizzes to identify what pupils have remembered. Teachers continue to make checks as pupils cover the curriculum as planned.
- You are developing a new system to provide remote education in the future. Staff are receiving training. You told us that when studying at home, pupils will be set work that is as close as possible to usual school activities.

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

Yours sincerely

Elizabeth Farr  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**