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Cassandra Malone
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Dear Mrs Malone

Ofsted visit to Sevenoaks Primary School

Following my visit with Frances Nation, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 10 December 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.

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 senior leadership team, the early years leader, subject leaders in English, mathematics, design and technology, personal, social and health education, religious education and members of the pastoral team. We did not speak to pupils because of the protective measures in place.

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 (coronavirus) 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 start of autumn term, approximately one quarter of pupils have had to study from home at some point for reasons related to COVID-19. This includes all pupils in Year 1.
- Pupils are studying their usual range of subjects with some adaptations in computing, music and physical education (PE). For example, pupils are learning music less frequently than usual to keep group sizes smaller and teachers are focusing on aspects of PE that can be taught outside. Leaders are planning to return to the school's normal curriculum by summer 2021.
- Teachers have checked what pupils remember in reading, writing and mathematics. They have found younger pupils' phonic knowledge is behind where it needs to be. In writing, teachers are concentrating on pupils' knowledge and skills in grammar, punctuation, spelling and handwriting.
- In mathematics, teachers are revisiting some areas to support pupils with their lost learning. They have noticed younger pupils' recall of number facts is not as strong. Across the school, teachers are focusing on helping pupils remember how to solve mathematical problems.
- In other subjects, leaders have changed the order of some content. Teachers are checking pupils' understanding in lessons to identify any gaps. In personal, social and health education, leaders are providing extra time to support pupils' well-being.

- Leaders are pleased with how children in early years have settled into school. During this term, teachers have been focusing on developing the early reading, writing and mathematics learning that children missed in nursery. They are giving more opportunities to help children develop the hand control they need to support writing.
- Leaders provide remote education to pupils studying from home. For pupils who may be isolating for one or two days, teachers set activities that revisit previous learning.
- When pupils are isolating for up to two weeks, teachers record lessons for pupils to access online. The school provides technical support to families when technology may not work.

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

Yours sincerely

James Broadbridge
Her Majesty's Inspector