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Jan Collins
Acting Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Collins

Ofsted remote visit to Fountaindale School

Following my remote visit with Rachel Tordoff, 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 interim executive headteacher, the safeguarding leader and the human resources officer. 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 start of term, a small number of pupils have had to learn at home. For some, this has been for a few days, while others have been at home on a part-time or full-time basis due to their additional needs.
- All pupils are studying their usual range of subjects. In music, singing is not currently taught. Educational visits are not taking place; however, leaders have adapted their wider curriculum offer to include activities such as the virtual 'signing choir' and playground VE Day celebrations.
- Leaders plan to return to the usual curriculum before summer 2021.
- Staff have assessed pupils' individual starting points to identify any lost learning from the time when the school was not open to all pupils. Checks show that pupils have mostly maintained standards in reading and writing but some have fallen behind in mathematics. Leaders noted that some pupils have declined in independence and physical strength.
- Staff have revisited key aspects of phonics with pupils of all ages for whom this is required. Outdoor storytimes and a weekly school newspaper have been introduced to promote communication and a love of reading.
- Where necessary, pupils receive support to help them catch up in mathematics.

- Leaders have held a virtual coffee morning for parents of older pupils, to discuss their next steps and aspirations. Positive links have been made with local colleges.
- Wider curriculum priorities focus on pupils' well-being, social interaction and physical development.
- Leaders have provided a combination of resources for pupils who are currently learning at home. These consist of access to online activities, paper-based packs and equipment for practical learning, such as a treasure hunt or baking.
- If a 'bubble' of pupils needs to self-isolate, the home-learning offer will consist of staff teaching lessons online, plus practical and paper-based activities designed to closely reflect the curriculum taught 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 Nottinghamshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Christine Watkins
Her Majesty's Inspector